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ABSTRACT

This bulletin describes the interplay of demographic and sociopolitical processes in Israel since the state's founding in May 1948 and projects what it might be to 2015. Heavy Jewish immigration, especially during the "mass immigration" of 1948-51, has balanced the high natural increase of Moslems so that the proportion of Jews in Israel's population at the end of 1982 was little changed from June 1948. By 2015 the Jewish proportion could be only 50 percent in a "Greater Israel" if Israel annexes the Occupied Areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip where 1.2 million Arabs now live. "Oriental" Jews from less developed North African and Asian countries, who were only 15 percent of Israel's Jewish population in 1948, outnumbered European American Jews by 1970. This was an important factor in the 1977 shift of political dominance from the leftwing Labor parties, supported by the better-educated, socialist-leaning European-American Jews, to a rightwing bloc, espousing economic policies based on more private initiative and Israel's historic rights to the West Bank. Western-oriented Jews, although still the country's "establishment," comprised only 40 percent of Israel's population by 1981. By 2015, their share is likely to be down to 30 percent within Israel's present boundaries. The questions of whether or not Israel will be a Jewish state and remain a Western society will continue salient into the 21st century. (Author)

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Population Bulletin

Israel's Population: The Challenge of Pluralism

By Dov Friedlander and Calvin Goldscheider

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Abstract—This *Bulletin* describes the interplay of demographic and sociopolitical processes in Israel since the state's founding in May 1948 and projects what it might be to 2015. Heavy Jewish immigration, especially during the "mass immigration" of 1948-51, has balanced the high natural increase of Moslems, who comprise the majority of Israeli Arabs, so that the proportion of Jews in Israel's population at the end of 1982 (83 percent of 4.1 million) was little changed from June 1948 (81 percent of 806,000). Even with Jewish immigration now low, this proportion is likely to be no lower than 76 percent in 2015, because Moslem fertility is now falling. But by 2015 the Jewish proportion could be only 50 percent in a "Greater Israel" if Israel annexes the Occupied Areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip where 1.2 million Arabs now live. "Oriental" Jews from less developed North African and Asian countries, 15 percent of Israel's Jewish population in 1948, with their largescale immigration to the mid-1960s and initially higher fertility, outnumbered European-American Jews by 1970. This was an important factor in the 1977 shift of political dominance from the leftwing Labor parties, supported by the better-educated, socialist-leaning European-American Jews, to the rightwing Likud bloc, espousing economic policies based on more private initiative and Israel's historic rights to Judea and Samaria (the West Bank). Western-oriented Jews of European or American origin, although still the country's "establishment," comprised only 40 percent of Israel's population by 1981. By 2015, their share is likely to be down to 30 percent within Israel's present boundaries and would be only 22 percent of the population of a Greater Israel. First raised by 19th century Zionists in Europe who set off the drive for reestablishment of a Jewish national homeland in Palestine, the questions of whether or not Israel will be a Jewish state and remain a Western society will continue salient into the 21st century.

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By Dov Friedlander and Calvin Goldscheider

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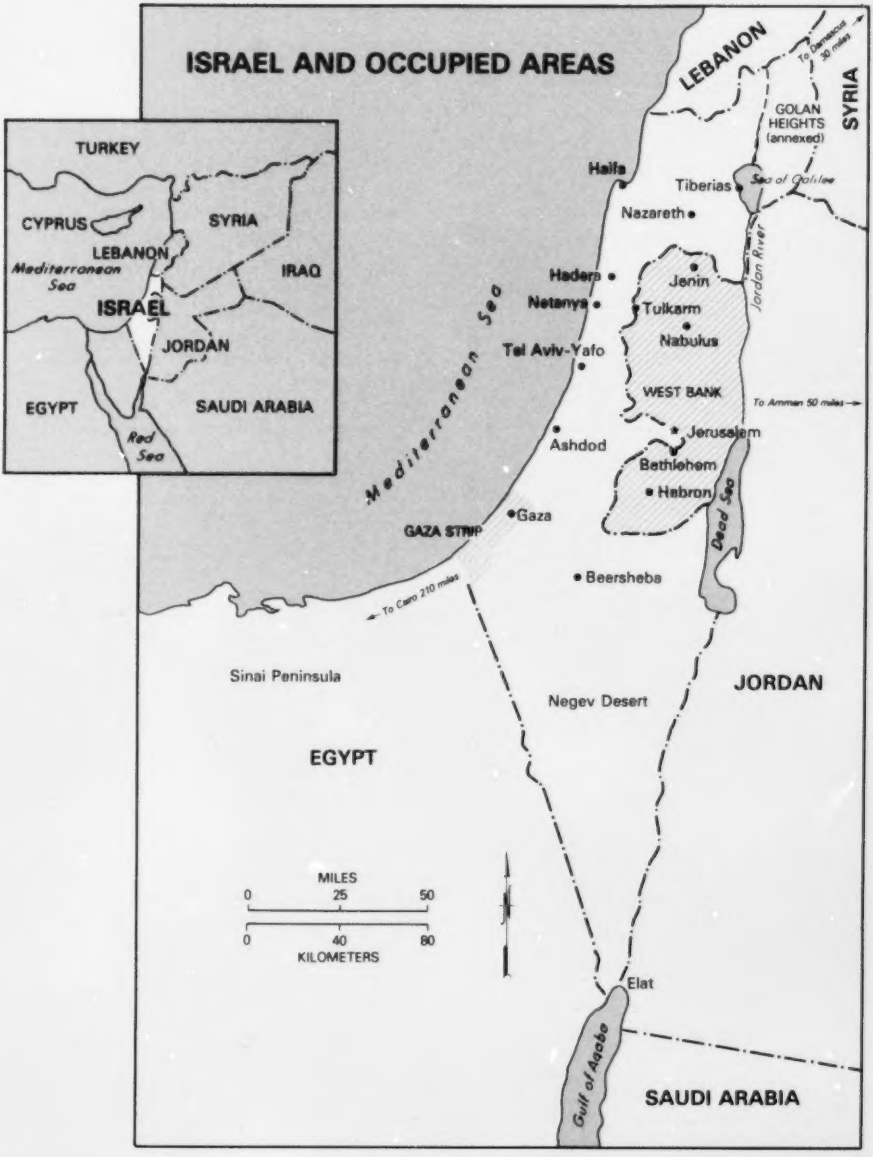
ISRAEL AND OCCUPIED AREAS
TURKEY
CYPRUS
SYRIA
LEBANON
Mediterranean Sea
IRAQ
ISRAEL
JORDAN
EGYPT
SAUDI ARABIA
Red Sea
LEBANON
To Damascus 30 miles
SYRIA
GOLAN HEIGHTS (annexed)
Haifa
Tiberias
Sea of Galilee
Nazareth
Hadera
Jenin
Netanya
Tulkarm
Jordan River
Tel Aviv-Yafo
Nabulus
Mediterranean Sea
WEST BANK
To Amman 50 miles
Ashdod
Jerusalem
Bethlehem
Hebron
GAZA STRIP
Gaza
Dead Sea
Beersheba
To Cairo 210 miles
Sinai Peninsula
Negev Desert
JORDAN
EGYPT
MILES
0
25
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80
KILOMETERS
Elat
Gulf of Aqaba
SAUDI ARABIA

Israel's Population: The Challenge of Pluralism

By **Dov Friedlander**
and
Calvin Goldscheider

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Israel

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Both authors have published extensively on a wide range of topics in demography and sociology. Fourteen of their joint and separate publications on population issues in Israel formed the basis for this Population Bulletin *and are listed in the Bibliography (page 39).*

Dr. Friedlander began preparation of this Bulletin *while he was at the Population Reference Bureau in 1982-83 as Andrew B. Mellon Visiting Scholar.*

Much of the hope for peace in the Middle East and, in turn, for peace in the world lies with the outcome of the Israel-Arab conflict. That conflict is part of broad social, economic and political changes which have characterized the region in this century. And these changes, in turn, have much to do with demographic changes, which have been particularly dramatic for Israel during its brief 36-year history.

Carved out of Palestine in fulfillment of the Zionist dream of a national homeland for the Jews, the state of Israel contained 650,000 Jews and 156,000 Arabs when the dust had settled following its founding in May 1948. Within three years, the Jewish population more than doubled as immigrants streamed in from Europe, Asia and North Africa in response to the new government's "mass immigration" policy. The homogeneous European Jewish population of British Mandate days was rapidly transformed into a social and cultural mosaic, and the repercussions are still being felt. The better-educated, socialist-leaning European Jews dominated economic and political life in the first 30 years of the new state's development. But "Oriental" Jews from less developed North African and Asian countries, with their largescale immigration to the mid-1960s and initially higher fertility, became the demographic majority of Israeli Jews by 1970. This was an important factor in the 1977 shift of parliamentary reins from the leftwing Labor Alignment party to Menachem Begin's rightwing Likud coalition government. With this came a shift in economic priorities and political policies. Although the fertility of Oriental Jews, at about three births per woman, has now dropped close to that of European Jews, they are

likely to remain the majority as Israel's economic problems discourage a substantial resurgence of immigration from Western countries. Indeed, net immigration (immigration minus emigration) has been very low in the past several years.

Another prominent strand shaping Israel's demographic mosaic is the sharp fertility differential between Jews and Moslem Arabs. Heavy Jewish immigration since 1948 has balanced the high natural increase of Moslems, who comprise the majority of Israeli Arabs, so that the proportion of Jews in the country's population at the end of 1982 (83 percent of 4.1 million) was virtually the same as in 1948 (81 percent). Even if Jewish net immigration remains low, this proportion is not likely to be reduced much in the future because Moslem fertility has now begun to fall.

The picture is complicated by the issue of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip which Israel has occupied and administered since its Six Day War of 1967 with Jordan, Egypt and Syria. Some 1.2 million Arabs, mostly Moslem, now reside in those areas. If Israel eventually annexes the areas, as many now propose, the proportion of Jews in the population of "Greater Israel" could be as low as 50 percent by 2015.

With this complex interplay between demographic and sociopolitical processes, Israel can be viewed as a "demographic laboratory." American sociologist Bernard Berelson described it in 1978:

> "Israel is an intensified microcosm, speeded up, of current population issues and responses. Hardly anything is missing: The most active immigration policy in modern history, social layers of differential fertility and mortality, planned population distribution internally, extreme demographic differences vis-à-vis hostile neighbors, wide-ranging demograhic projections resting on the judgments of individual couples on the one hand and the decisions of international politics on the other, worrisome regional trends affecting security prospects, reproductive practices subject to strong religious and cultural proscriptions both Jewish and Arab, rational efforts at policy consideration and instrumentation, shortfall from policy goals."[1]

In this *Bulletin* we focus on the major features of Israel's current demographic laboratory, describing the trends which shaped the present population mosaic, and then outlining what the future consequences of current population patterns might be. All the statistics cited, unless otherwise noted, refer to Israel proper (excluding the West Bank and Gaza) and come from Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics. Data from the most recent census of May 1983 have not yet been released, but comprehensive, up-to-date statistics are available from the Bureau's sophisticated population registration system, supplemented by periodic surveys of families, education, labor and other topics.

Background

Geography

Israel is located in Southwest Asia, on the eastern wing of the Mediterranean. Its total land area is 21,501 square kilometers (8,302 square miles), about the size of the state of New Jersey. This includes the eastern sector of Jerusalem (controlled by Jordan after Israel was carved out of Palestine in 1948 but reunited with Jerusalem's western sector after the Six Day War of 1967) and the Golan Heights (part of Syria after 1948, occupied and administered by Israel after 1967, and annexed in December 1981). It excludes the Gaza Strip in the southwest and the West Bank (the Judea and Samaria of Palestine's ancient history), which became part of Egypt and Jordan, respectively, in 1948, but occupied and administered by Israel since the 1967 war (see map, page 2, and the chronology, page 6).

Bordered by Lebanon on the north, Syria and Jordan to the east, Egypt's Sinai Peninsula on the southwest, and the Gulf of Aqaba at its southernmost

tip, Israel has a 115-mile Mediterranean coastline, but in places is only 15 miles wide. The densely populated coastal plain along the Mediterranean contains two of the country's three largest cities: Haifa, the leading port, handling 60 percent of the country's foreign trade, and Tel Aviv-Yafo. Residents of the metropolitan areas of these two cities, along with those living in Jerusalem, the capital, make up almost half of the nation's population. Close to half of Israel's land area is claimed by the arid Negev desert in the southern triangle of the country, much of which is inhabited by nomadic Bedouins who make up 10 percent of the nation's Arabs. Stretching north from Beersheeba, the Negev's major city, to the Galilean Hills is the Central Hills region, bordered on the east by the Dead Sea and the Jordan Valley. In this area and along the coast, the climate is Mediterranean, with a mild rainy season from October to April and hot, dry summers. Temperatures are considerably higher in the Negev desert and the Jordan Valley.

Centuries of overcultivation and overgrazing have depleted the natural vegetation of the region. But intensive cultivation on small farms and the collective *kibbutzim* and *moshavim* has revived agriculture north of Beersheeba and even in the Negev. Although agricultural products account for only 5.8 percent of the country's net domestic product and only 7 percent of the labor force now works in agriculture, Israel's citrus fruits, avocadoes and flowers, for example, are now prominent in supermarkets throughout Western Europe.

Government

Israel is a parliamentary democracy, governed by the one-house Knesset (parliament), whose 120 seats are divided proportionately among all political parties gaining at least 1 percent of the vote in elections held every four years or more often. The Knesset appoints the country's president for a five-year term, and he in turn selects as prime minister the leader of the party winning the most votes in an election and thus most likely to be able to form a cabinet and a viable coalition government from among the parties represented in the Knesset. Israel has some 30 political parties. Currently holding Knesset seats are the major rightwing Likud party, the leftwing Labor Alignment, the National Religious Party, and smaller parties, such as the extreme religious party, *Aguda Israel*, a nationalist secular party, *Tehiya*, a Communist party and an Arab party. (Arabic is the second official language of the country, along with Hebrew.) All the coalition governments of the first 30 years of statehood were led by the Labor party (or its successor, the Labor Alignment party), headed until 1963 by the nation's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion. During the early days of statehood, the Knesset passed the Law of Return, stating that "every Jew has the right to come to this country" in accord with the policy of "ingathering of the exiles," laws instituting free compulsory primary education, compulsory military service (except for Arabs), and a wide variety of government-funded health and welfare benefits. The last two Labor Party prime ministers were Golda Meir and Yitchak Rubin, who served from 1969 to 1977. Since then, the Likud bloc, headed by Menachem Begin and, as of September 1983, by Yitzhak Shamir, has been in power.

The Likud takeover following the 1977 elections brought a major shift from socialism and a pragmatic approach to the territorial issues of the West Bank and Gaza to economic policies based on more private initiative and an ideological emphasis on historic rights to Judea and Samaria and the "Land of Israel." Long-term social and political changes were at the core of this shift, along with dissatisfaction with the costly legacy of the Yom Kippur War of 1973. Also of major importance was the growing preponderance of Jews of Asian or African origin and their dissatisfaction with their continuing social and economic lag behind the "ruling" European-American Jews.

A Chronology: 1882-1983

1882-1903 First wave of modern immigration to Palestine *(Aliya);* 25,000 Eastern European immigrants arrive.

1897 First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, organized by Theodore Herzl, formally launches drive for Jewish return to the Land of Israel.

1904-14 Second *Aliya;* 40,000-55,000 Jewish immigrants arrive from Eastern Europe and Russia.

1917 Great Britain, in Balfour Declaration, supports creation of "National Home" for Jews in Palestine.

1919-23 Third *Aliya;* 35,000 Jews arrive, mostly from Poland and Russia.

1923 League of Nations establishes British Mandate over Palestine and directs Britain to encourage "close settlement of Jews upon the land."

1924-28 Fourth *Aliya;* 67,000 immigrants arrive, half of them middle-class, urban Poles.

1929-39 Fifth *Aliya;* 250,000 Jews, one-quarter of them refugees from Nazi Germany, arrive in Palestine.

1939 Great Britain issues White Paper on Palestine, curbing Jewish immigration and land purchase.

1945-48 Almost 75,000 immigrants arrive, most illegally.

1947 United Nations proposes partition of Palestine into Arab states (Judea and Samaria, or West Bank, and eastern Jerusalem to go to Jordan; Golan Heights to Syria; Gaza Strip to Egypt) and a Jewish state (the remainder).

1948 State of Israel comes into existence (May 14). Total Jewish population is 650,000. War of Independence begins as Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria invade Israel.

1948-51 Mass immigration; 690,000 Jews arrive from Europe, Asia and North Africa.

1949 First Knesset convenes with David Ben-Gurion as Prime Minister. Armistice signed with neighboring Arab countries. Jerusalem divided, western half to Israel, eastern half to Jordan.

1950 Knesset passes Law of Return, granting all Jews the right to immigrate to Israel.

1956 Suez Crisis: Egypt nationalizes Suez Canal, closing it to Israeli shipping. Israel invades Gaza Strip and Sinai, then withdraws under U.S. pressure.

1967 Six Day War (June 6-11): Israel launches pre-emptive strike against Egypt, Syria and Jordan, gaining control of the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza Strip, Golan Heights and West Bank, including Jerusalem. Jerusalem reunited.

1968 First Israeli settlement in occupied West Bank.

1973 Yom Kippur War: Syria and Egypt attack Israeli forces on Golan Heights and along Suez Canal. After early reversals, Israel closes in on Damascus and crosses Suez Canal.

1974 Disengagement agreements between Israel and Egypt and Syria after Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's "shuttle diplomacy."

1977 Likud coalition takes over Knesset, under Prime Minister Menachem Begin, ending Labor Party dominance. Egyptian President Anwar Sadat visits Jerusalem.

1978 Israel invades southern Lebanon to root out Palestinian guerillas; U.N. buffer zone created. At Camp David with President Jimmy Carter (Sept. 5-17), President Anwar Sadat and Prime Minister Begin agree to conclude peace treaty within three months.

1979 Knesset approves Israel-Egypt peace treaty.

1980 Israel begins phased withdrawal from Sinai; invades Lebanon for second time, pro-

voked by renewed terrorist attacks.

1981 Knesset votes annexation of Golan Heights.

1982 Israel again invades Lebanon to rout Palestine Liberation Organization terrorists and Syrians.

1983 Menachem Begin resigns (Sept. 15), succeeded by Yitzhak Shamir as Prime Minister. Israeli troops mired in southern third of Lebanon. Number of Jewish settlers in occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip reaches 30,000.

Source: Based in part on "A Chronology, 1882-1982," in "The Future of Israel," *The Wilson Quarterly*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (1983) pp. 52-53. Reproduced with permission.

With their higher fertility, "Oriental" Jews from Asia and North Africa now outnumber the European Jews who dominated at the state's founding, especially in the voting-age population. Jewish immigrants from Asian and African countries and their Israeli-born children are the major supporters of the Herut party, the senior partner of the Likud bloc.

Occupation and the economy

Being poor in fertile soil, water, minerals and oil, Israel's most important national assets are its human resources. Changes in occupation reflect the country's shift from the early emphasis on agriculture to a diversified industrial economy and now toward services, research and "high technology." Between 1965 and 1982, the proportion of employed men working in agriculture dropped from 13 to 7 percent, other laborers declined from 47 to 42 percent of the male work force, and the proportion in scientific, academic and professional occupations doubled from 9 to 18 percent (see Table 1). Women made up 37 percent of the labor force in 1982.

The country's various ethnic and religious groups have not shared equally in this occupational shift. Lowest in occupational and general socioeconomic status is the Arab population, with relatively high proportions working in agriculture, construction and public works. Ranking somewhat higher is the Jewish Oriental group. Highest on the ladder is the Jewish population of European-American origin (immigrants and their descendants). In 1982, just 12 percent of Arab men in the labor force were employed in the most prestigious white-collar jobs and 12 to 14 percent of Jewish men of Afro-Asian origin, compared to 34 to 43 percent of European-American Jewish men (see Table 3, page 11). This three-tiered stratification is at the heart of Israel's population mosaic and is intimately related to demographic trends.

Israel produces a variety of goods for world and domestic markets. Highly technological and industrialized, the economy grew by an average 10 percent a year—a near-world record—in the first 25 years of statehood. Since the Yom Kippur War, with deliberate government policies to curb growth and increasingly heavy military expenditures, the growth rate has slowed to about 3 percent a year, on average, in line with other developed nations.

Table 1. Employed Men, by Occupation: Israel, 1965-1982

Occupation	1965	1973	1978	1982
Total employed men (in thousands)	635.4	746.8	789.8	823.8
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Scientific, academic, professional	9.3	13.6	16.2	17.8
Administrators, managers, clerical	14.8	16.0	17.2	17.3
Sales and service workers	15.4	16.3	16.2	16.4
Agricultural workers	13.2	7.9	7.4	6.8
Skilled and unskilled laborers	47.3	46.2	43.0	41.6

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel*, various issues.

Always heavily dependent on imports, Israel before 1973 was able to finance the excess of imports over exports with grants and loans from abroad, mainly from the United States. (Military and economic aid from the United States to Israel since its formation now totals over $25 billion.) Since then, escalating defense expenditures and increased costs of imports (especially oil) have swollen the country's foreign debt to $21.5 billion, which represents the highest per capita debt in the world. This has accelerated inflation, which by early 1984 was running at over 200 percent computed on an annual basis. Also contributing to inflation are continuing heavy government outlays on transportation, communications, education and generous social programs, along with high levels of private consumption, prompted in part by indexation—automatic adjustment of wages, savings, social security benefits and interest payments to the rate of inflation. Despite inflation, however, real incomes have typically risen in recent years. The average salary of wage earners in 1982 was about 33 percent higher in real terms than in 1975. (Israel's per capita gross national product was $5,528 in 1982; that of the United States, $13,240.) And despite its economic problems, Israel, unlike other industrialized countries, has maintained full employment; unemployment was only 3 percent in the 1970s, although it has now risen somewhat higher. Full employment has prevented major social conflict among the country's diverse ethnic groups and is an important element in maintaining internal cohesion in the face of security threats.

Education

Educational attainment has increased steadily for all groups, but significant differences remain. Similar to the three-tiered occupational ranking, Jews of European-American origin have the highest levels of education, followed at some distance by Oriental Jews and then Arabs, although Christians among the Arab population attain higher educational levels than Moslems. For example, data for 1982 (standardized by age) show proportions of men and women with 13 or more years of education at 39 percent for Israeli-born Jews of European origin and 34 percent for those born in Europe or America, but only 12 percent for Israeli-born Oriental Jews and 10 percent for those born in Asia or Africa. Although education is compulsory between the ages of 5 and 15 and free through high school, Oriental Jews, because of their poorer preparation, are less likely than those of European background to pass the admission tests to academic high schools, which are the only avenue to university, and more likely to be enrolled in the country's large system of vocational and agricultural schools.

Population

At the end of 1982, Israel's total population numbered 4.1 million (4,063,600), of whom 83 percent (3,373,200) were Jews and 690,400 were non-Jews, mostly Arabs (see Table 2). The Jewish population is made up predominantly of immigrants who arrived after the establishment of the state and their Israeli-born descendants. In 1982, 23 percent of the Jewish population had been born in Europe or America; 19 percent in Asian or African countries; and 58 percent were native born. Among the native-born, or *sabras*, 28 percent were born of European or American parents; 45 percent of African or Asian parents; and 27 percent were third generation. The non-Jewish population is divided into three religious groups; 77 percent in 1982 were Moslems (almost entirely of the Sunni branch of Islam), 14 percent were Christian Arabs (mainly Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholics and Roman Catholics), and the remaining 9 percent were virtually all Druze (an Arab group whose religion is an outgrowth of Mohammedanism and dates from the beginning of the 11th century). The Arab population in the Israeli-administered West Bank and Gaza Strip numbered 1,223,800 at the end of 1982.

Table 2. Population of Israel, by Religion, Ethnic Origin and Birth Place: 1948, 1961, 1972, 1982

(Numbers in thousands)

Population group	1948[a]	1961[b]	1972[b]	1982[a]
Total country	881.7	2,179.4	3,147.7	4,063.6
		Jewish population		
Total	716.7	1,932.3	2,686.7	3,373.2
European-American origin				
Total	*591.4*[c]	1,007.1	1,187.3	1,343.6
Born in Europe or America	393.0	672.1	749.7	785.3
Second generation, born in Israel	*198.4*	335.0	437.6	558.3
African or Asian origin (Oriental)				
Total	*105.0*	818.3	1,273.6	1,496.7
Born in Africa or Asia	70.0	529.8	665.0	628.1
Second generation, born in Israel	*35.0*	288.5	608.6	868.6
European-American and Afro-Asian third generation, born in Israel	20.3	106.9	225.8	532.9
		Non-Jewish population		
Total	165.0	247.1	461.0	690.4
Moslem Arabs	—	170.8	352.0	530.8
Christian Arabs	—	50.5	72.1	94.0
Druze and others	—	25.8	36.9	65.6

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel*, various issues.

[a]1948 and 1982 figures are as of year end.
[b]1961 and 1972 figures are as of mid-year.
[c]Italicized figures are estimates.

Note: First-generation Jews are those born outside Israel; second generation are those born in Israel of foreign-born parents; third generation are those born in Israel of Israeli-born parents.

Some 30,000 Jews now inhabit settlements in these areas.

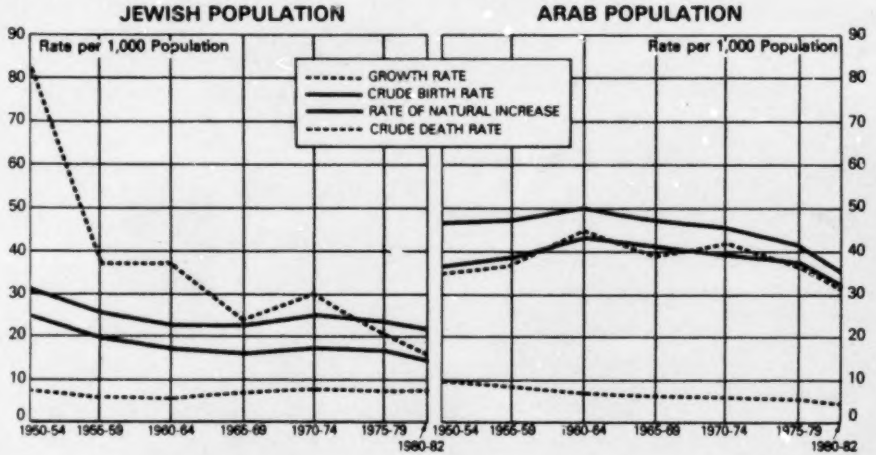
Israel's population growth rate in 1982 stood at 1.8 percent, and was almost entirely due to "natural increase" (the excess of births over deaths). The birth rate was 24.0 per 1,000 population and the death rate, 6.9 per 1,000. (The U.S. birth and death rates in 1982 were 16.0 and 8.5, respectively.) This is a far cry from the earliest years in the nation's history when waves of Jewish immigration pushed growth in some years over 8 percent (see Figure 1, page 10).

Overall life expectancy at birth was nearly 74 years in 1982; 75 years for the Jewish population and 72 for Arabs (Table 3, page 11). Infant mortality is low overall at 13.9 infant deaths under age one per 1,000 live births in 1982, but the rate for Moslems (22.1) is nearly double that of the Jewish population (11.6), which ranks with that of the United States (11.3 in 1982).

Marriage

Marriage is virtually universal among both Jews and Arabs in Israel, reflecting

Figure 1. Vital Rates for Jewish and Arab Populations of Israel, Annual Averages: 1950-1982



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Center for International Research, based on official data from Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel.

the enormous value placed on marriage and the family in both cultures. Among Jews, recent marriage rates have dropped from 9.7 per 1,000 population in 1975 to 7.7 in 1980 and 7.1 per 1,000 in 1982. (The U.S. marriage rate in 1982 was 10.6 per 1,000 total population.) The decline reflects some delayed marriage, due in part to a "marriage squeeze" since the late 1960s—a shortage of men aged 25-29 compared to women aged 20-24 (the usual ages for marriage) resulting from changes in annual numbers of births some 25 years earlier. Israel's economic problems and high housing costs, together with some liberalization in norms regarding nonmarital cohabitation, may also have affected the timing of marriage. Nevertheless, the overwhelming pattern remains high rates of marriage and family formation, with little variation among ethnic groups.

Among Jews, both Afro-Asians and European-Americans now marry at about the same ages; a median of age 25 for men and age 22 for women (Table 3). This contrasts with patterns 15 to 20 years ago when Afro-Asians married an average two years earlier than Jews of European-American origin. Both Jewish groups marry somewhat later than Arabs, due for the most part to their greater educational attainment.

Very few marriages occur between Jews and Arabs in Israel, but marriage between Afro-Asian and European-American Jews has increased steadily since 1955. By 1980-82, the rate of such "ethnic outmarriage" seemed to have leveled off at about 20 percent of annual marriages among Jews. Strong pressures to marry despite smaller pools of eligible ethnic partners account for part of this increase, but it also signals some easing of ethnic constraints and increased integration. Ethnic outmarriage is apparently more likely for better-educated Afro-Asian Jews and less-educated European-American Jews.

Fertility

In contrast to marriage patterns, differentials in fertility are still evident, though much narrowed after being at a peak

Table 3. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Major Subpopulations: Israel, 1982

Population group	Median age at first marriage[a]		Total fertility rate[b] (births per woman)	Life expectancy at birth (years)	Percent employed males in high white-collar jobs[c]	Percent women aged 25-34 in labor force
	Male	Female				
Total Jews	24.7	21.9	2.79	74.5	25.7	60
Born in Europe-America	25.5	22.5	2.81	74.0	33.7	64
Born in Israel, European-American origin	24.3	21.6	2.66	74.2	43.0	68
Born in Afro-Asian countries	25.9	22.7	3.06	73.7	13.5	49
Born in Israel, Afro-Asian origin	24.3	21.6	2.88	74.2	12.4	57
Total Arabs	23.4	19.4	5.21	72.0	11.9	14
Moslems	23.6	19.4	5.53	—	—	—
Christians	26.8	21.4	2.34	—	—	—

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics data or authors' estimates based on official CBS data.

[a]Data for 1979. Figures are estimates and should be interpreted with caution.
[b]The total fertility rate of a given year indicates the average number of births per woman in a population if all women were to live through their childbearing years (ages 15-49) bearing children at the same rates as women of those ages actually did in that year.
[c]Includes scientific, professional, administrative and managerial occupations.

among Jews in the 1950s and between Jews and Arabs in the mid-1960s. The major differences are between the lower fertility of Jews and much higher fertility of Arabs as a group, and, within these groups, between the slightly lower fertility of European-American Jews compared to Oriental Jews, and the much lower fertility of Christian Arabs compared to Moslems.

In 1982, the total fertility rate of Moslem Arabs (5.53 births per woman) was double that of Jewish women as a whole (2.79), but this was a marked change from 1965 when the Moslem fertility rate was nearly triple that of Jewish women—9.87 versus 3.47 (see Table 5, page 24, and Figure 4, page 25). Ethnic fertility differentials among Jewish groups had almost disappeared by 1982. For immigrants born out of the country, the rates were 3.06 births per woman for Afro-Asian women versus 2.81 for European-American women, and for native-born Israelis, the rates were 2.88 for those of Oriental origin versus 2.66 for the European-Americans (see Table 3). Christian Arab women had the lowest fertility of all ethnic-religious groups in 1982—2.34 births per woman. (The total fertility rate for U.S. women in 1982 was 1.8; 1.7 for white women and 2.2 for black women.) Fertility differentials, along with Jewish immigration, have shaped Israel's distinctive demographic history to date and in turn have played a large role in the country's political and social development. Although they are now narrowing, they will continue to have an impact for decades to come.

Immigration

Until recently, immigration has been the most important source of population growth for the Jewish sector, particularly in the earlier years of statehood. As seen in Figure 1, from 1950 to the mid-1960s and again in the mid-1970s, the overall growth rate for Israel's Jewish population far exceeded its rate of natural increase (the excess of the birth rate over the death rate, leaving out of account the

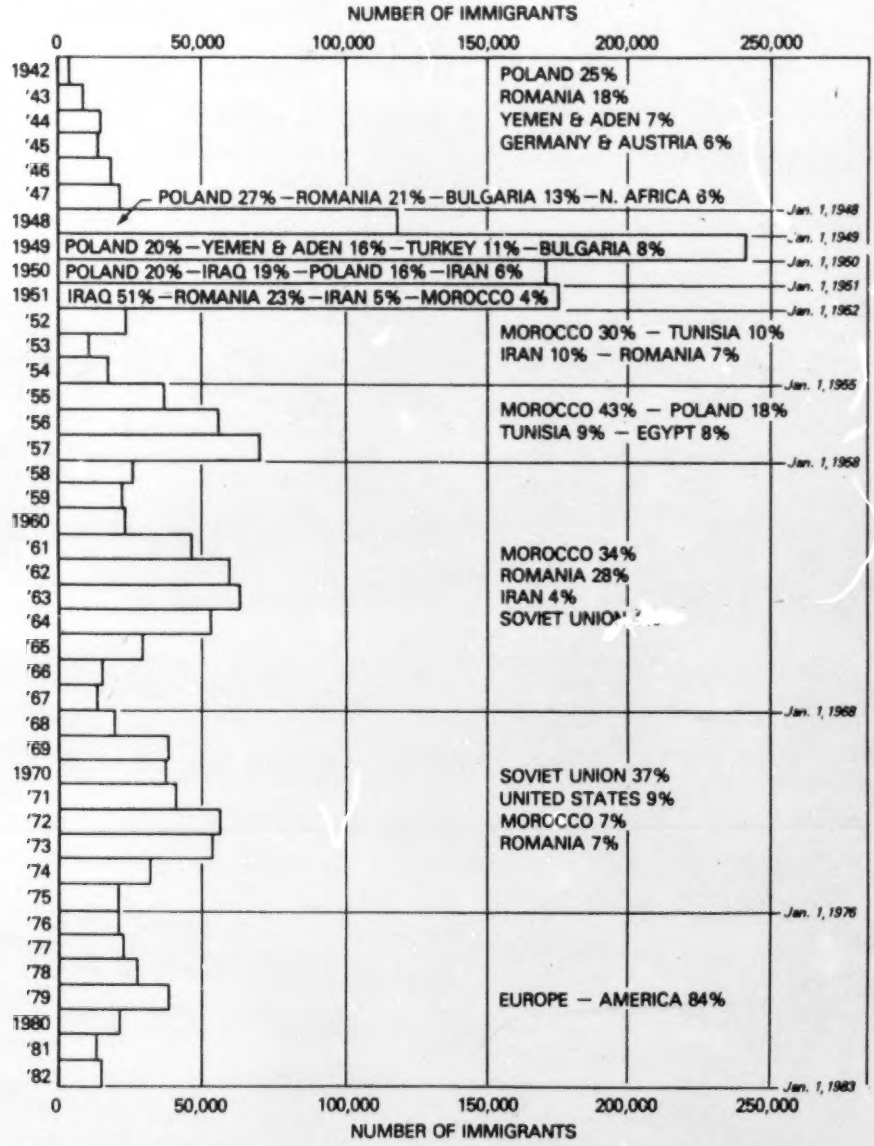
contribution of net migration to population growth—or decline). Though natural increase has been much higher for the Arab population, Jewish immigration has maintained the balance in the overall growth rates for the two groups, so that the proportion of Jews in Israel's total population at the end of 1982 (83 percent) was virtually the same as at the end of 1948 (81 percent), as is evident from the population figures in Table 2 (page 9). But immigration can no longer be counted on to keep up Jewish growth rates. Figure 2 shows that Jewish immigration has declined dramatically since the early 1970s. In 1982, fewer than 14,000 immigrants arrived, compared to 56,000 a decade earlier in 1972. Further, emigration has increased in recent years. Although it is impossible to calculate the number of emigrants, the evidence indicates that immigration barely exceeded emigration between 1980 and 1982.

The decline in immigration partly reflects the waning of Israel's attraction for Jews living elsewhere, as economic conditions and political and security problems have become more difficult since the Yom Kippur War of 1973. Emigration has increased for the same reasons. Indeed, despite the importance of Zionism as an ideological factor in migration to and from Israel, socioeconomic and political factors have largely determined the pace and direction of migration in recent years. Conditions that prompt emigration may change in the future, but immigration is unlikely ever to resume on a large scale. This is because Jewish communities in African and Asian countries have been depleted by earlier migration to Israel and other countries and Jews in most other countries have not been under strong pressure to emigrate in recent years. Only the Soviet Union at present has a large remaining pool of Jews eager to emigrate and very few are now being allowed to leave. Many of these are unlikely to migrate to Israel, as has been true in recent years of Jews who have felt political or economic pressures to move—from Argentina and South Africa, for example. Even among Jews from Western countries who have recently chosen to move to Israel, it is estimated that about one-third return to their country of origin within three years.

Population age structure

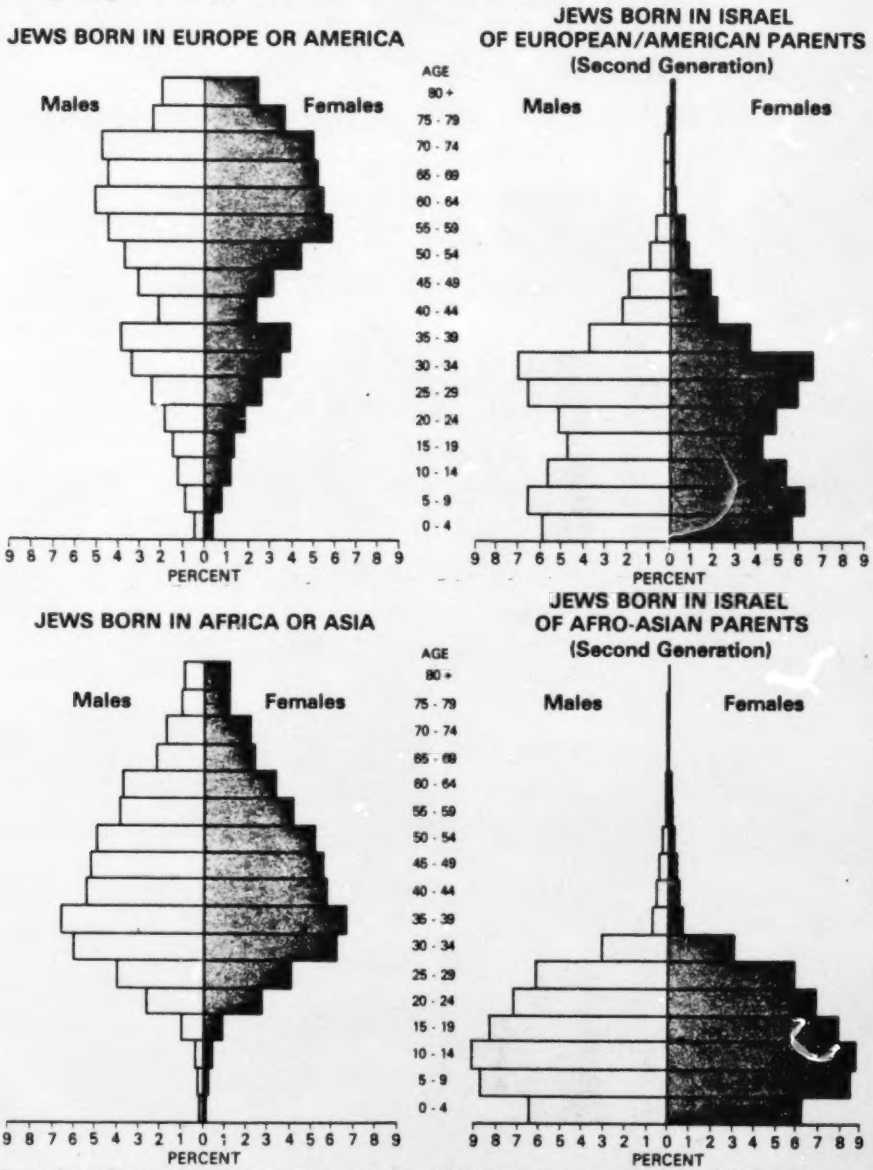
The timing and composition of immigration flows and differential fertility have resulted in very different age structures of the various subgroups in Israel, as seen in the population age pyramids in Figure 3 (page 14). The broad bases of the pyramids for the two Jewish Israeli-born groups, and especially that of Moslems, illustrate the impact of relatively high fertility. They all have young age structures, with large proportions of children under age 15, although the recent decline in fertility is particularly evident for the Israeli-born of Afro-Asian origin in the sharp pinching in of their pyramid at ages 0-4. By contrast, the two first-generation Jewish immigrant groups are now predominantly middle-aged or older. In the past, when the volume of immigration to Israel was very large relative to the population already in the country, the age characteristics and fertility levels of immigrants dominated the evolution of Israel's population structure. Now the period of such mass immigration is over and unlikely to be repeated. Hence, like most other countries, Israel's overall population age structure is increasingly shaped almost entirely by fertility patterns, although it might be affected in the future by declining mortality rates at the older ages. Already the relatively broad-based pyramid for the total population in 1982 reflects the increasing weight of Israeli-born *sabras;* in 1982, this youthful population made up 58 percent of the Jewish population. The median age for Israel's total population in 1982 was a relatively youthful 24.4 years. (The U.S. population median age is currently 31.) With their high fertility, Moslems—who make up 13 percent of the total population—have an extremely low median age of just 15.

Figure 2. Annual Immigration to Israel and Variations in Origin: 1942-1982

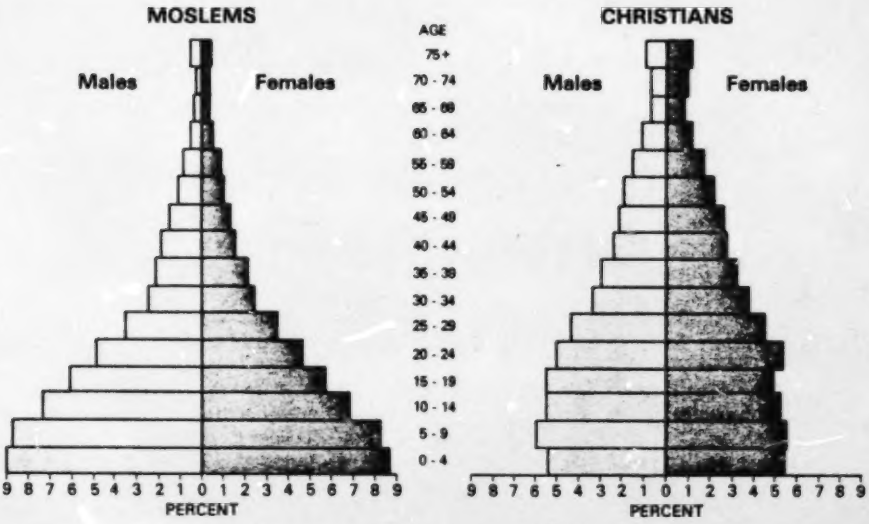


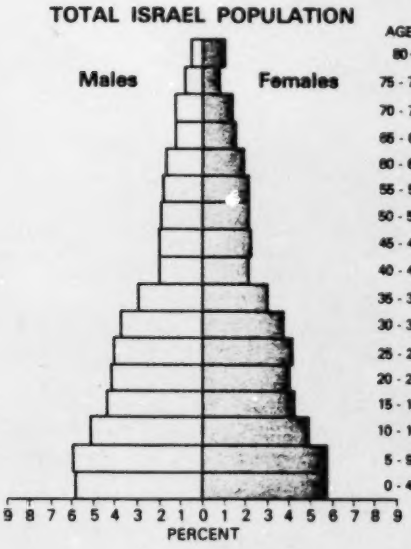
Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel*, various issues.

Figure 3. Population Age Pyramids of Total Population and Subgroups: Israel, 1982



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 1983*, No. 34 (Jerusalem: 1983) Tables II/17 and II/22.





Population policies

Migration to Israel has for generations been rooted in Jewish religious ideology and, more recently, in secular nationalism, or Zionism. Born in the latter 19th century among avant-garde, secular, urban Jewish thinkers in Europe, Zionism stressed, among other issues, the return of Jews to their historical homeland. Thus, immigration was already a focus of population concern in Palestine before the foundation of the state of Israel. Until World War I, however, only relatively few Jews settled in Palestine, then a part of the decaying Ottoman Empire (see chronology, page 6). But in the spirit of Zionism, the Jewish community in Palestine and its leaders increasingly adopted policies to step up the flow of immigration in order to increase the Jewish population, both in absolute size and relative to the Arab population. From 1919 to 1948, immigration into Palestine was controlled by the British government,

who had stated in the Balfour Declaration of 1917 that "His Majesty's Government views with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people." Large numbers of migrants were allowed to enter until growing tensions between Jewish and Arab residents prompted Britain to impose severe restrictions in the late 1930s. Immediately after the war, tens of thousands of Jewish refugees from Europe sought to enter Palestine, whether or not legally, and the right to immigrate became a symbol in the struggle toward national independence. Immigration was also the prime policy issue (after defense) in the early days of statehood, as Ben-Gurion was committed to increasing Jewish numbers rapidly, both for ideological reasons and to galvanize economic development and bolster the country's security.

Conflicting political interests of Jewish and Arab communities in Palestine, restrictions imposed on Jewish immigration by the British, and news of the wartime fate of European Jewry were three important elements in the concern over perceived low and declining Jewish birth rates before the foundation of the state of Israel. Concern over "low" birth rates again intensified as immigration waned following the mass immigration of the early years of statehood. Thus immigration and, to a lesser degree, fertility were important demographic policy issues both before and after Israel's establishment in 1948.

One of the first laws passed by the Knesset, in 1950, was the Law of Return, granting every Jewish person, irrespective of origin, the right to immigrate to Israel and to settle there with the assistance of the state. This policy has encouraged and enabled hundreds of thousands of Jewish people from some 70 countries to migrate to Israel. By contrast, there has always been much less consensus over the issue of "low" Jewish fertility. Pressures for action toward the establishment of a pronatalist policy came mainly from rightwing political parties, and especially from the religious parties, which have always had considerable power in the country's government and administrative machinery. Thus, in 1962, Prime Minister Ben-Gurion appointed a Population Committee to study and make recommendations for dealing with fertility issues.

The Population Committee's report, submitted in April 1966, recommended that a special government body be established to deal with the problem of low Jewish fertility and to promote the welfare of large families. Among other recommendations, it suggested that working conditions be arranged for married women so that they could both continue to work and have larger families and that loans be made available to "growing" families to finance larger apartments. It also recommended that abortion be curbed in order to increase the birth rate.

A Demographic Center was duly established in 1968 as an administrative unit within the Prime Minister's office (and subsequently moved to the Ministry of Labor and Welfare). However, the Demographic Center has so far taken no action of demographic consequence. For Israel to offer incentives large enough to prompt Jewish women to have more children would take an outlay far beyond the means of a country burdened with the highest per capita defense expenditures in the world. Further, no country has so far succeeded in an attempt to achieve a sustained fertility increase, even those with more resources than Israel to invest in such an effort. This explains why deliberate pronatalist incentives have not so far been instituted and are unlikely to be in the future. (As part of its social welfare policies, however, the state does provide free medical services for women giving birth, a three-month postnatal income allowance for working mothers, and child allowances, instituted in 1959, apparently generous enough to serve as one inducement for large families among low-income Moslems. See page 27.) Another consideration is that a policy designed to affect only a segment of the

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population, Jews, is difficult to implement within a democratic framework.

The Population Committee's policy recommendations regarding abortion and family planning in general also had little impact, but a description of Israel's fertility trends obviously calls for a sketch of the situation in both areas.

Abortion

At the time of the committee's report, Israel actually had a law prohibiting abortion except in order "to preserve the women's health." But in practice the law had not been enforced after 1952 and violators were prosecuted only in rare cases; for example, if the abortion resulted in the death of the women. In 1977, a more liberalized law was passed, permitting abortion in an approved medical institute for a variety of reasons, including social or economic hardship that would ensue from the birth. The abortion request had to be approved by a committee of two medical practitioners and a social worker. In response to rightwing political pressure, the socioeconomic clause was removed from the law just two years later, in 1979. It is not yet clear what effect this re-restriction has had on abortion patterns. Estimates in the early 1980s put the current number of legal abortions at about 15,000 per year, comprising 60 percent of estimated total abortions. The annual ratio of legal abortions to live births is approximately 15 per 100 and the ratio of total abortions to births is about 25 per 100. (The estimated ratio of legal abortions to live births in the United States in 1980, the latest year for which data are available, was 43 per 100.[2])

No recent estimates are available on abortions by ethnic or religious group. However, some clues come from a national survey conducted in 1975 when most abortions were technically illegal, but widely available from private physicians.[3] This indicated that 28 percent of married Jewish women under age 55 had had at least one induced abortion, rising to 36 percent among women married for at least 20 years. For native-born Israeli women the proportion was even higher—49 percent—with small differences between those of European or Afro-Asian origin. The figure for Jewish married women born in Africa or Asia was 28 percent, and for the European-born, it was 38 percent.

Embassy of Israel

A family celebrates Hanukkah. Perceived "low" Jewish fertility has long been a policy concern in Israel.

Contraception

In a country where medical care and services have been public and socialized for decades, family planning services are conspicuously absent. Very few of the public health clinics which cover the overwhelming majority of families provide such services, and then only on a small scale and usually at the initiative of local physicians. Modern contraceptives are available, but their use requires consultation and regular followups and these are generally available only from private clinics and physicians.

Government and medical circles are ambivalent about family planning, torn between concern to increase Jewish fer-

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tility, on the one hand, and concern over the social welfare costs of large families on the other. This translates into pronouncements about the need for public family planning services but no action to provide them. Contraception and birth control are generally regarded as private matters.

The most recent available data on contraceptive use also come from the 1975 survey of Jewish married women under age 55. This revealed that overall only 30 percent used the pill or an IUD and an additional 17 percent used other mechanical contraceptive methods. One-third of the women reported using only natural methods, withdrawal or rhythm. This is undoubtedly one explanation for the relatively high levels of reported abortions. The survey also found, however, that contraceptive practice and use of more efficient methods were higher among younger women and Israeli-born Jewish women. Among women married in the ten years before the survey, 1965-74, 58 percent of those planning their families used the pill or the IUD. For women married from 1955 to 1964, the figure was 44 percent, and for those married in 1945-54, it was 28 percent.

Israel's Current Socio-Ethnic Structure

Three major dimensions are used to identify the components of Israel's population mosaic: ethnicity, generation in Israel, and religion. The Jewish group is identified by ethnic origin—European-American or Afro-Asian—and, within these groups, by generation: first generation born abroad and second generation born in Israel. There is another group of third and subsequent generations of Jews born in Israel whose parents were also Israeli-born (about 9 percent of the Jewish population) but the ethnic origin of this group is not distinguished in official statistics. The classification of the population by religion distinguishes Jews from Arabs, and Moslems, Christians and Druze among Arabs, most of whom were born in what is now Israel. Half a million Arab natives of this area fled when Israel was formed in 1948, most to the formerly Palestinian regions of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, administered by Israel since 1967, where there are now over one million Arabs. (Unofficially, distinctions can be made within the Jewish population by religiosity: about 15 percent may be defined as religiously observant; 35 percent as secular; and the majority as intermediate. Oriental Jews are more likely to be traditional in religious practices and European Jews are more secular. Secularization and polarization between the religious and the secular have increased over the decades.[4])

European-American Jews

First-generation Jewish immigrants born in Europe or America consist of Eastern Europeans, some of them pioneers who immigrated during the 1920s or earlier, migrants from Germany and Austria who arrived during the 1930s after the rise of Naziism, wartime survivors who flooded in from refugee camps all over Europe after World II (mostly illegally until British rule was ended in May 1948), and immigrants from Communist countries arriving since the early 1950s, particularly Soviet Jews who came during the 1970s, plus a relatively small number of immigrants from Latin America, South Africa, and the United States.

Age at marriage among these first-generation immigrants is slightly higher than the national average (26 for men and 23 for women in 1979); fertility is moderate at 2.8 births per woman in 1982; and life expectancy is 74 years (see Table 3, page 11). This is now an aging group (Figure 3, page 14) and rapidly declining in importance. But this represents the group which started the modern resettlement of Palestine, fanned the flames of Zionist nationalism, developed the country economically, and

bolstered the political strength of the Jewish community which led eventually to the establishment of the state of Israel. Until recently, also, this group was the country's undisputed "establishment," controlling both political power and economic resources.

Israeli-born European-American Jews of the second generation are a relatively young group (Figure 3), with fertility slightly below that of the parent generation (a total fertility rate of 2.7 births per woman in 1982), and high life expectancy (Table 3). Educational levels are high and members of this group now hold the more important posts in Israel's industry, economy, civil service and army, as well as in the scientific community. Women's labor force participation is highest among this group; 68 percent of women aged 25-34 were working in 1982, as seen in Table 3.

Micha Bar-Am/The New York Times

Afro-Asian supporters of Menachem Begin demonstrate in Jerusalem. Oriental Jews outnumbered European-American Jews by 1970, which was an important factor in the 1977 election victory of Begin's rightwing Likud bloc over the leftwing Labor parties.

Oriental Jews

Almost all Afro-Asian Jews of the first generation migrated to Israel between 1948 when the state was founded and the late 1960s. The majority are from North Africa—Morocco, Tunisia, Libya and Algeria—but other important origins are Iraq, Yemen and Iran. This group is also aging now (Figure 3), though not so fast as European-born immigrants. Its current fertility is relatively high, and highest of the four Jewish groups—just over 3 births per woman—and life expectancy is only slightly below that of the other Jewish groups (Table 3). As already noted, the occupational status and educational levels of this group are relatively low, and so is average income. Among Jews, the proportion of working women aged 25-34 is lowest for this group (49 percent in 1982) but this is still three-and-a-half times the comparable figure for the total Arab population (14 percent).

Afro-Asian Jews of the second generation have a very young age structure (Figure 3). They are the largest and fastest-growing of the Jewish groups. Their fertility is lower than that of first-generation Afro-Asians (2.9 births per woman in 1982), and their educational level is higher, but still much lower than that of Israeli-born Jews of European-American origin, as noted.

In sum, these groups still differ somewhat in fertility and considerably in population age structures, though they are similar in life expectancy. Along with marked socioeconomic variations, these demographic differences are related to group differences in political orientation and voting behavior. While a majority of first- and second-generation European Jews support the leftwing Labor parties, a large proportion of Orientals support the rightwing Likud parties. When the Likud bloc increased its share of total votes in the most recent election of 1981, about two of every three of its supporters were of Oriental origin, while supporters of the Labor party, ousted from control in 1977, were 70 percent European-American Jews.

All these groups are concentrated in urban localities (defined as settlements with 10,000 or more inhabitants, but also including certain nonagricultural settle-

ments of fewer than 10,000). More than 90 percent of the Jewish population lived in urban areas in 1982 and the level has been high throughout the nation's history. Within both smaller towns and the large metropolitan centers, the two ethnic groups tend to live segregated from each other. While many European Jews congregate in better-off inner-city areas and suburbs, many Oriental Jews remain segregated where they or their parents were sent upon arrival—"development towns" that have evolved from the early immigrant transit camps, or the areas that were abandoned Arab quarters inside or adjoining Tel Aviv, Jerusalem or Haifa. This residential segregation reinforces ethnic community institutions and distinctive behavior. Living close together encourages socialization, interaction and marriage within ethnic groups and thus helps maintain differences between European and Afro-Asian Jews, despite their growing similarities in other socio-demographic characteristics.

Arabs

About half of the Moslem Arab population in Israel is still rural, while the Christian Arab population is predominantly urban. Both groups rank far lower on the socioeconomic scale than Jews. For example, the average Arab household in urban areas has only about 70 percent of the income of its Jewish counterpart, according to a 1982 survey of the Central Bureau of Statistics, and the gap would be wider if rural families were included in the survey. Both Moslems and Christian Arabs are seldom eligible for the more generous child welfare payments, subsidized government housing loans and other increased benefits available to families who have had at least one member in the army because both groups are excluded from military service (though not the Druze). However, Christian Arabs are generally better off than Moslems.

Demographically, their life expectancies are similar at 72 years in 1982, two-and-a-half years below the figure of 74.5 for the Jewish population (Table 3). However, Christian Arabs have lower infant mortality than Moslems, a fertility rate less than half as high (2.3 compared to 5.5 births per woman in 1982), and marry on average two to three years later (Table 3). In fact, Christian Arabs now have the highest median age at first marriage for men (26.8 years) among all groups in the nation, along with the lowest fertility, as noted.

These socioeconomic and demographic differences are sources of tension and conflict now in Israeli society and may be exacerbated in the future. Oriental Jews already outnumber Jews of European or American origin and are increasing faster and are likely to dominate numerically in the future. Another gap is that between Jews and Arabs—socially, politically, culturally and demographically. Currently, Jews far outweigh Arabs in Israel's population at 83 percent to 17 percent, but the difference is bound to narrow in the future. In the combined populations of Israel and the Occupied Areas, the current majority of Jews is only 64 percent and this, too, will decline.

The third gap is broader and relates to the national character of Israeli society, crossing ethnic and religious boundaries. This is the gap between "Oriental" and "Western" cultures. The percentage of people of European origin is currently about 48 percent within the Jewish population in Israel, 40 percent in the total national population, and just 31 percent in the populations of Israel and the Occupied Areas combined. These proportions are likely to decline appreciably in the future. This could mean the waning of Israel as a Western-oriented society. Thus, demographic trends strike at the core of the nation's character.

Demographic Sources of Current Patterns

What explains Israel's present sociodemographic mosaic? To answer this, we take a look back at the demographic processes since the state's foundation.

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Mass immigration: 1948-51

In early 1948 on the eve of Independence, the total population of Palestine was about 2 million, of which one-third was Jewish. The end of the British Mandate and declaration of statehood in May 1948 altered the demographic situation considerably. Geographically, the newly established Jewish state occupied only part of Palestine. Moreover, over 500,000 Arabs living in areas included in the new state fled as fighting between Israel and its Arab neighbors erupted into a full-scale War of Independence. Hence, the population of Israel in June 1948 consisted of 806,000 people—650,000 (81 percent) Jews, and the rest Arabs. As Table 4 shows (page 22), 85 percent of the Jewish population was of European origin. One of the more important political and demographic implications of Independence was the shift in the control over immigration to Jewish authorities. This touched off one of the most remarkable waves of migration in modern history, the socalled "mass immigration." Within three years, the Jewish population of Israel was doubled.

The first to arrive were European Jews who had been rerouted to Cyprus by the British authorities when attempting to immigrate illegally. Also among the first were refugees from Germany, Austria and Italy who had been waiting in refugee camps all over Europe, and Jews from Eastern Europe where it was feared that the right to emigrate would soon be cut off. These were joined by the first post-Independence immigrants from the Middle East, especially Yemen, Aden and Algeria, where repercussions of the Arab-Israeli conflict were making conditions untenable for long-established Jewish communities. All told, 100,000 immigrants arrived in 1948, most of them in two or three months at the end of the year, implying an enormous immigration rate of 17 per 100 relative to the initial population. The total for 1949 was about 250,000: from Turkey, Libya, the entire Jewish community of Yemen (35,000), and Poland and Romania as those countries opened up for Jewish emigration (see Figure 2, page 13). These diverse streams continued in 1950, with immigrants from Romania, Poland and North African countries dominating. Finally, 175,000 more arrived in the first half of 1951, about 100,000 from Iraq.

This ended the wave of mass immigration, dominated in the beginning by migrants from Europe and then by Oriental Jews from North Africa and Asia. The effects of that enormous influx on Israel's population can be seen in Table 4. Between June 1948 and the end of 1951, the Jewish population more than doubled, from 650,000 tc 1.4 million; the proportion of Jewish population of Oriental origin increased from 15 to 33 percent; and the Jewish proportion of Israel's total population rose from 81 to 90 percent. Hence, mass immigration changed Israel's population profile radically in a very short period. It also had major long-term effects.

Mass immigration was prompted on the one hand by the enormous reservoir of Jews eager to migrate to Israel and, on the other, by the extraordinary efforts made to bring in the largest possible number of Jewish immigrants in the shortest possible time, despite the hardships that would inevitably follow. Three factors propelled these efforts. First, it was recognized that increasing the Jewish population was the most direct way to create a viable Israeli society, both in the short and long run. Second, a rapid influx of immigrants was the only way to acquire human resources sufficient to defend the country against hostile neighbors. Third, mass immigration to a Jewish state was the concrete fulfillment of a core theme in Zionist ideology. In all three respects, Israel's immigration policies following Independence were remarkably successfuly.

However, mass immigration involved heavy costs, both immediately and over the long term. Economic hardships in Israel following the War of Independence and mass immigration were severe: inflation, high unemployment among newcomers as the few available jobs were

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Table 4. Demographic Development of Israel's Population: 1948-1981

Demographic characteristic	Time period	Jewish population		Arab population	
		European	Oriental	Moslem	Christian
Total population	June 1948	550,000	100,000	107,000	49,000
Percent of major group	June 1948	85	15	69	31
Percent of total population	June 1948	68	13	13	6
Life expectancy	About 1948	69	35-40[a]	50	60
Total fertility rate	About 1948	3.2	6.3[a]	7.4	4.6
Annual rate of natural increase, per 1,000	About 1948	20	20[a]	39	27
Net immigration	June 48-June 51	350,000	337,000	0	0
Total population	End 1951	940,000	465,000	120,000	53,000
Percent of major group	End 1951	67	33	69	31
Percent of total population	End 1951	60	29	8	3
Life expectancy	1952-66	70.6	70.6	67.4	67.4
Annual rate of natural increase, per 1,000	1952-66	13	22	46	25
Net immigration	1952-66	236,000	334,000	0	0
Total population	End 1966	1,196,000	1,149,000	223,000	90,000
Percent of major group	End 1966	51	49	73	27
Percent of total population	End 1966	44	42	10	4
Life expectancy	1967-81	73	73	70	70
Total fertility rate	1967-81	2.7	3.2	7.6	3.2
Annual rate of natural increase, per 1,000	1967-81	8	19	42	19
Net immigration	1967-81	361,000	87,000	0	0
Total population	End 1981	1,588,000	1,731,000	514,000	144,000
Percent in major group	End 1981	48	52	78	22
Percent of total population	End 1981	40	44	13	4
Percent of population in Israel and Occupied Areas	End 1981	31[b]	34[b]	10[b]	3[b]

Sources: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel*, various issues; and authors' estimates, based on official censuses and registration.

[a]These figures relate to the period before immigration. During 1948-51, life expectancy and the annual rate of natural increase for the Oriental Jewish population was approximately 66 years and 40-45 per 1,000 population, respectively.

[b]This distribution was calculated by including 1,180,000 Arabs in the territories administered by Israel after 1967, representing 23 percent of the combined 1981 populations of the state of Israel and the Occupied Areas of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Note: All population numbers are rounded. The Christian population is equal to the total non-Moslem Arab population for population figures and Christians only for all other data. Jewish data include estimated data for the Israeli-born of Israeli-born parents (third generation) by ethnicity, which are not collected by the Central Bureau of Statistics.

given to demobilized soldiers when the war ended in mid-1949, and shortages of everything, especially housing. As the supply of abandoned Arab housing came to an end, immigrants were gathered in transit camps, *ma'aborot*, where they were housed in tents and hastily constructed barracks. In early 1952, a quar-

ter of a million immigrants lived in transit camps, most of them latecomers in the immigration wave. For the better-educated, skilled European immigrants, the stay in transit camps was usually brief. But many non-European immigrants lingered on and were less integrated into the mainstream of Israeli life as the camps evolved into "development towns."

Later immigration

Altogether, 1.7 million immigrants arrived in Israel between 1948 and 1982; almost 700,000 in the mass immigration wave of 1948-51. Thus immigration in the three decades since 1951 has been much less spectacular, although still high by international standards. Oriental immigration, primarily from North Africa, dominated up to 1966, but by then the reservoir of Jewish population in Arab Middle Eastern countries had dwindled because of earlier emigration. Immigrants in the early 1970s were predominantly European, while in the later 1970s and early 1980s, as noted, immigration from all sources waned markedly. During the 1970s, the largest proportion of immigrants came from the Soviet Union, some from Romania and the United States, and a few from Latin America (particularly Argentina) and from among the Jewish Moroccan population of France. Of the 47,000 immigrants arriving between 1980 and 1982 24,000 came from Europe, 14,000 from America, and the rest from Asia or Africa.

Demographic integration of Oriental immigrants

With their large numbers in the early years of immigration, combined with high fertility and rapidly declining mortality, Oriental immigrants quickly became a large and increasing proportion of the Jewish population. Their arrival changed the pre-Independence cultural and demographic homogeneity of that population. In looks, dress, diet, speech and education, the newcomers differed from

Embassy of Israel

A Moroccan mother and child in an immigrant transit camp of the early 1950s.

their European compatriots. Most, for example, spoke Arabic as their first language, while Yiddish was the mother tongue used at home by many pre-Independence immigrants. Socioeconomic differences have not disappeared, as we have seen, but the mortality and fertility patterns of Oriental Jews have now converged with those of European Jews.

Coming from nonmodern, nonindustrialized Arab countries of the Middle East and North Africa, Oriental Jewish immigrants were generally uneducated and unskilled by Western standards. Their health was poor; life expectancy at birth in societies from which they came was often as low as 35-40 years (see Table 4). Most of them had worked in small family-run businesses. After immigration to Israel, this close link between work life and family life was broken as most working men became hired laborers or employees in larger industrial enterprises. And in Israel, where education was compulsory for at least eight years, Oriental Jews' educational levels increased. As a result, there were dramatic changes

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Table 5. Total Fertility Rates, by Religion and Place of Birth: 1955-1982

(Number of births per woman)

Population group	1955	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1982
Total population	4.03	3.95	3.99	3.97	3.68	3.14	3.12
Jewish population							
Total	3.64	3.49	3.47	3.41	3.21	2.76	2.79
Born Europe-America	2.63	2.38	2.60	2.84	2.82	2.76	2.81
Born Africa-Asia	5.68	5.10	4.58	4.07	3.77	3.04	3.06
Born in Israel	2.83	2.76	2.88	3.12	3.08	2.76	2.80
Arab population							
Moslems	7.96	9.31	9.87	8.95	7.75	5.98	5.53
Christians	4.85	4.61	4.74	3.62	3.35	2.66	2.34
Druze and others	6.58	7.88	7.61	7.46	6.85	6.09	5.48

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel*, various issues.

Note: See Table 3 (page 11) for definition of the total fertility rate.

in the mortality, fertility and marriage patterns of Afro-Asian Jews.

Their mortality transition was particularly rapid and occurred virtually overnight. All immigrants were drawn into the existing comprehensive health service system on arrival. Thus, initial ethnic differences in mortality disappeared almost immediately; by 1966, life expectancy at birth was 71 years for both Oriental and European Jews (Table 4). This mortality transition—an accelerated version of the mortality transition that occurred in the less developed countries of Asia and Latin America in the 1950s and 1960s—was the beginning of the demographic convergence between population subgroups in Israel.

Consistent with patterns in the traditional societies from which they came, the fertility rate of Oriental immigrants probably averaged six or seven births per woman about the time of their arrival. The socioeconomic transformation following immigration implied, among other things, an increase in the direct and indirect costs of childbearing and rearing. Thus, it is not surprising that their fertility transition began quite soon after immigration. The total fertility rate of Afro-Asian immigrant women dropped 28 percent, from 5.68 to 4.07 births per woman, in the 15 years from 1955 to 1970 and in 1982, just another 12 years later, was down to 3.06, about half the 1955 level (see Table 5 and Figure 4).

The conflict between high fertility and the new societal characteristics of these immigrants was so sharp that couples began simultaneously to space out births and to stop childbearing earlier than previous generations had. The usual fertility transition pattern—in Western societies historically and in developing countries today—is that first older women begin to stop childbearing earlier and only later do younger couples begin to stretch out the intervals between marriage and the first birth and that and later births.

The sharp decline in fertility among Oriental immigrants and a small increase in fertility among European immigrants resulted in convergence in the fertility patterns of the two major ethnic groups of Israel's Jewish population, as illustrated in Figure 4. By 1982, as noted, there was little difference in the fertility rates. It is notable that the fertility decline among Afro-Asians occurred in a society where almost no government family planning facilities are provided and where pronatalist attitudes have always existed and been reinforced by ideology and popular culture.

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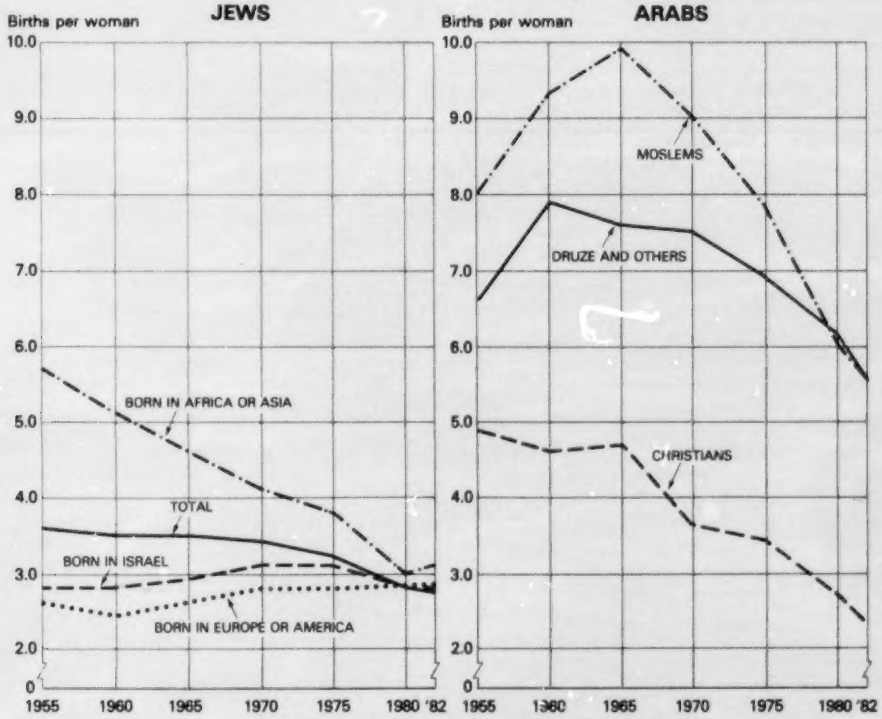
Figure 4. Total Fertility Rates for Jews and Arabs: 1955-1982



Source: See Table 5.

Family-size ideals converge

Associated with this convergence in the actual fertility behavior of the two Jewish ethnic groups was a convergence in fertility norms, or ideal family size. National survey data collected in the mid-1970s revealed that at that time, the number of children that women considered ideal still varied considerably between Afro-Asian women and women of European origin among Jews and between Moslems and Christians among Arab women. For Jewish women born in African or Asian countries, the ideal was over five children, on average, in contrast to an average of 3.5 children reported by Jewish women of European origin. The ideal for Moslem women averaged 6.1 children in urban areas and 6.9 in rural areas, and for Christian Arab women, the averages were 5.0 in urban areas and 5.6 in rural areas. However, family-size ideals were smaller among Jewish women of Afro-Asian origin born in Israel and among the more recently married women of both Jewish ethnic groups and both Arab groups. This suggests that there is a growing consensus among both Jews and Arabs in Israel around a family of three to four children—higher than the average family ideal of two children now typical of most more developed countries.

Detailed data reveal that among young Jewish couples of both ethnic groups there was a relatively close fit in the mid-1970s between ideal family size and

actual fertility behavior. Thus the decline in Afro-Asian fertility was evidently accompanied by a downward adjustment in fertility norms.

Among Moslem women, however, ideal family size was much lower than actual fertility, on average. From this it could be expected that Moslem fertility, particularly among the better-educated and urban women, would continue to decline. This has indeed happened markedly since the mid-1970s, as described below. However, the evidence also suggests that programs are needed to minimize the gap that still remains between the actual and desired family size of Moslem women.

Age structure effects

The heavy influx of immigrants concentrated in a short period following Independence and the large proportion of high-fertility Oriental immigrants among the newcomers resulted in wide fluctuations in Israel's population age structure and dynamics. This has had a long-lasting impact on social processes that are age-related—infant care, schooling, military recruitment, marriage and voting.

The average annual number of births in 1948 through 1952 (33,900 per year) was more than double the number of births in Palestine in 1947 (16,200). In the next five years, the annual average went up to 43,200. This baby boom meant that health services and nursery schools needed for infants and small children had to be abruptly expanded. Next, primary schools had to be expanded rapidly to accommodate the flood of children reaching age six, the usual age for entrance into primary school. In 1952, children aged six were triple the number in 1947 and in 1957, the number was quadruple the number ten years earlier. Then in the mid-1960s, the secondary school system had to cope with a doubling of the school population of this age. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the pool of military draftees suddenly expanded. (By law, all males and all unmarried females are required to join the armed forces at age 18; men to serve for three years, women for two. Arabs, except for Druze, are exempt from military service.) About the same time, the first enlarged cohort of women reached their early twenties, the usual age for women to marry. However, their potential spouses—men several years older—originated from relatively small birth cohorts. This imbalance in the number of potential brides and grooms resulted in a "marriage squeeze" for women.

These age dynamics, along with the increasing proportion of Jews of Oriental origin, also contributed very significantly to the change in political power in 1977 when the Likud bloc emerged with the largest share of votes in the election and displaced the Labor Party to form a coalition government. The large cohorts born during and following the mass immigration period, with their relatively large proportion of Jews of Oriental origin, reached voting age (18) in the late 1960s and early 1970s. By 1977, the Jewish population aged 20-24 was about 60 percent of Oriental origin and 40 percent of European-American origin. Just ten years earlier, these proportions were split evenly. Hence, the rise to power of the first Begin coalition government was partially a product of demographic dynamics which had started nearly three decades earlier when the Ben-Gurion government initiated and implemented the policy of mass immigration. This impact has continued. A recent study reveals that in the 1981 election, in which the Likud bloc increased its share of the total vote, about 90 percent of young Jews of North African origin voted for parties represented in the Likud coalition, compared with just 25 percent of European-American Jewish youth.[5]

Moslem fertility decline delayed

An interesting question in the demographic history of Israel is why the fertility decline of the Moslem Arab population

(and that of the Druze, whose characteristics are similar) was so long delayed. Welfare and living standards improved noticeably during the British Mandate for all Palestinian Arabs and this progress accelerated after 1948 for Arabs living in the new state of Israel. This half century of socioeconomic development, which was particularly rapid after 1948, might have been expected to lead to lower fertility and smaller family sizes, as happened in most of the now developed countries beginning in the late 19th century and is noted today when comparing less developed countries at different stages of development. Yet, during the whole Mandate period the fertility of married Moslem women was about eight births or more per woman. When Israel was established in 1948, the total fertility rate for the remaining Moslem population of some 107,000 was about 7.4 births per woman (Table 4). Thereafter, the rate increased to nearly 10 births per woman in the mid-1960s and a significant decline began only in the mid-1970s (see Table 5 and Figure 4).

To explain this delay, we need to examine the relationship between the extent of socioeconomic development and changes in the family and roles of women and the timing and speed of fertility change. The experience of the Arab Moslem population in Israel is a remarkable illustration of such interrelationships.

From 1948 to 1962, Israel's Arab population lived under military administration, which made communication and social interaction with the Jewish sector difficult. Israeli military and civil authorities found it convenient to deal with the Arab minority through its traditional political institutions. This did much to preserve and strengthen the *Hamule*, networks of kinship groups based on patrilineal descent that held political and economic power in traditional Moslem Arab villages and derived much of that power from the size of their related extended families. Hence, the traditional social structure of the Arab minority changed very little during the first 25 years of Israeli rule. One important result was that no alternative channels for social mobility, for the role and status of women, and for the transmission of political power were formed outside the traditional *Hamule*. Nevertheless, the level of living of Israeli Arabs improved and many more social services were made available to them.

The Israeli system of compulsory primary education covered the Arab population and within a decade educational levels began to rise noticeably. Health services were expanded; by 1976, the proportion of Arab women giving birth in hospitals was 98 percent, up from 55 percent in 1960, and Arab life expectancy was up to about 67 years by the mid-1960s, only three years behind the level for the Jewish population (Table 4). Even before the military administration ended, Arab villagers were selling farm products to the Jewish sector and earning more than they had during the British period because improved technology increased their production. After restrictions on Arab movement out of military controlled areas was lifted in 1962, the percentage of Moslems working in agriculture declined rapidly. The majority of the rural work force became hired laborers, commuting to jobs in the Jewish sector. The demand for laborers increased rapidly during the economic boom between the Six Day War of 1967 and the Yom Kippur War of 1973 and Arab village income per capita increased nearly to $2,000 a year—far above the level of other traditional societies.

Other changes included improved communications; many Arab villages were drawn into the network of roads, telephone and the mass media. Electricity and central water supplies reached the majority of Arab villages. Like all Israeli citizens, Arabs participated in the comprehensive state social security and social welfare system. Particularly relevant here were free prenatal and postnatal care, free hospitalization for mothers giving birth, and an income allowance for working mothers for three months after delivery. Most important

Embassy of Israel

An Israeli Moslem mother and daughters in their village near Haifa. Moslem socioeconomic progress was rapid after 1948 but marked fertility decline began only in the mid-1970s.

was the introduction of child allowances in 1959. By 1974, these allowances constituted 30 percent, 36 percent, and 42 percent of the average wage in Israel for both Jewish and Arab families with six, seven and eight children, respectively. Since the wages of Arabs are generally much lower than average, the contribution of child allowances to total income was even more important for Arab families, and undoubtedly represented an attractive fertility incentive.

These changes did not affect the different Arab population subgroups equally. Arabs living in urban areas, predominantly Christians, had been exposed to affluence and modern living conditions for many years. Social structure, and the family in particular, changed more rapidly in the city than in the rural village. In the village, the more skilled and educated could enjoy the new general prosperity more fully than the unskilled and uneducated.

Such changes in other societies usually result in lower fertility, as parents choose to have fewer children in order to take still more advantage of expanding socioeconomic opportunities. But for the Moslems of Israel, the pattern of development after 1948 actually reinforced the benefits of large families.

One factor was the continuing importance of the traditional *Hamule*, and for the *Hamule*, and in turn for the family and women, high fertility was still a source of power and prestige. Although the majority of rural Moslem workers might now take jobs outside the village (without actually moving from the village), this apparently did not contribute sufficiently to the weakening of extended family ties to affect fertility. Such mobility merely meant that some members of the family (including women and children) could remain in agriculture while other adults could work in the Jewish sector at substantially higher incomes. Increased incomes, along with welfare allowances like free primary education, subsidized high school education and health services, and, particularly, the extremely generous child allowances, meant that both large families and other familial and individual goals, as well as new consumption items, could be achieved simultaneously. Hence, the large family could survive, despite the fact that socioeconomic change tended to weaken family ties.

In other words, not all aspects of socioeconomic development inevitably produce strains, leading to conflict with high fertility in the short run. Indeed, some factors could reduce such strains and delay conflict. This is why the process of fertility decline for Israeli Moslems lagged behind socioeconomic progress longer than might have been expected. However, this is not to argue that the conflict between high fertility and the maximization of opportunities was averted; it was only delayed. Continuing development has now led to a rapid drop in Moslem fertility. In the seven years between 1975 and 1982, the total fertility rate for Moslem women declined nearly 30 percent, from 7.8 to 5.5 births per woman (Table 5 and Figure 4).

Lower fertility among Christian Arabs

Israel's small minority of Christian Arabs developed differently. It was more urban, more educated, more likely to be employed in white-collar occupations, and much less family oriented than the Moslem population. It was also the first and only Arab group where fertility began to decline already during the British period. Evidence from the 1961 Israeli census suggests that for women married during the early 1920s, the completed family size of Christians was similar to that of Moslems. But by the mid-1950s, the total fertility rate of Christian Arab women was down to less than two-thirds the rate of Moslem women (4.9 versus 8.0 births per woman) and declining rapidly to a rate of 2.3 births per woman in 1982 (Table 5 and Figure 4).

Arabs in West Bank and Gaza

The 1.2 million Arabs living in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, occupied and administered by Israel since 1967, are mostly Moslems who remained or resettled there when Israel was founded in 1948. Some socioeconomic progress has occurred for these Moslems—slowly between 1948 and 1967, and much more rapidly since the Israeli takeover. But so far few signs of fertility decline are evident.

From sketchy data it appears that educational levels increased about as much for Arabs in the West Bank and Gaza as for Israeli Arabs between 1948 and 1967, when the two populations were totally cut off from each other. During this period, however, real income remained constant in the West Bank and Gaza, while more than doubling for Israeli Arabs. After 1967, Moslems in the Occupied Areas began to catch up, although living standards and health conditions remain below those of Arabs in Israel. Like Israeli Moslems, these Moslems have rapidly shifted out of agriculture to factory work, construction and services; more than 75,000 (about one-third of the work force of the two areas) now commute to jobs in Israel proper. Between 1968 and the mid-1970s, real income per capita more than doubled to $600, though this was still below the $2,000 for Israeli Arabs at that time. With the extension of health services under the Israeli administration, life expectancy at birth rose from 49 to 55 years over the same period, and the percentage of births taking place in hospitals nearly tripled from 13 percent in 1968 to 36 percent in 1980. Thus, socioeconomic progress in the Occupied Areas has resembled that of Israeli Arabs, but with a delay of about a decade.

The same appears to be true of fertility patterns. The surveys of the mid-1970s mentioned earlier revealed that the more recently married women in the Occupied Areas had had more births up to that time than older women had had at comparable times in their marriage. This pattern was similar to that which characterized the fertility of Israel's rural Moslem population a decade or so earlier. Fertility decline had apparently then not yet begun in the Occupied Areas. Fertility was similar and high in both rural and urban areas. The only signs of lower fertility were found for women with nine or more years of education. However, this was a small group, representing less than 10 percent of all married women, although about a quarter of the younger married women, married less than ten years.

One reason for the continued high fertility in the West Bank and Gaza is probably the fact that there, too, the traditional *Hamule*, with its emphasis on large families, appears to have retained its central place in the social structure. As happened in Israel itself from 1948 to 1962, contacts between Israeli authorities and the Arab population of the Occupied Areas have been channeled mainly through the *Hamule* since 1967, thus probably reinforcing its prestige and legitimacy. On the other hand, the generous child allowances, which have probably been an inducement for large fam-

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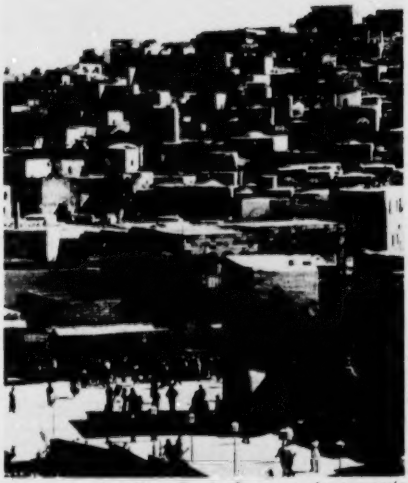


Embassy of Israel

Hebron in the West Bank. Some socioeconomic progress has occurred for Arabs in the Occupied Areas but few signs of fertility decline are evident so far.

ilies among Israeli Moslems, have not been extended to Arabs in the Occupied Areas. This might lead one to expect lower fertility among Moslems of the West Bank and Gaza than in Israel proper, but this has not been the case.

Published estimates by the Central Bureau of Statistics suggest that between 1968 and 1980 crude birth rates remained high and little changed—around 45 per 1,000 population in the West Bank and 50 and more per 1,000 in the Gaza Strip. Age-specific birth rates also indicate continuing high fertility among Moslems in both areas. The latest figures based on Central Bureau of Statistics estimates show some decline in the annual rate of births per 1,000 population in the West Bank since 1976, due particularly to a rise in women's age at marriage. This should not be taken as a clear sign that the fertility decline has begun in the West Bank at least, because "crude" birth rates, particularly for Israel's Occupied Areas, are necessarily based on rough estimates of annual births and population size and are further influenced by changes in population age structure.

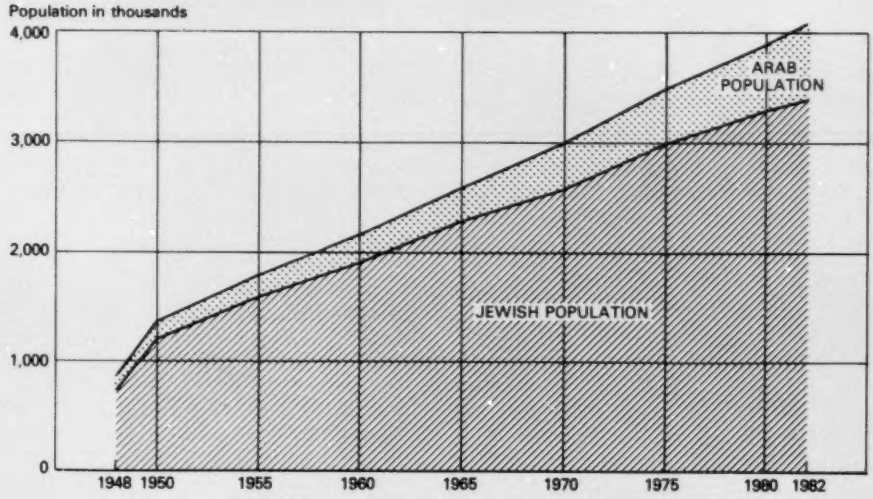
Although the birth rate and the rate of natural increase are still very high in the Occupied Areas, the population of the West Bank, at least, has grown very little over the past 30 years. This population was 724,000 in 1952 and increased only to 747,000 in 1982; since 1975, annual growth has averaged only 1 percent. (The Gaza Strip experienced negative growth rates in the late 1960s but grew at an average rate of 2.7 percent per year in the 1970s, to reach an estimated 454,000 people in mid-1983.) Obviously emigration rates have been high in the West Bank. Before 1967, many Arabs of the West Bank moved to the more industrialized East Bank where more jobs were to be found and since then, many have been attracted by higher pay in oil-rich Arab states of the Persian Gulf and, more recently, by opportunities in Europe and America.

Jewish-Arab balance since 1948

There has been no net immigration of Arabs into Israel since the state was formed, but natural increase of this population averaged about 4.5 percent a year from 1948 to 1981 (Table 4, page 22). The Jewish population grew mainly through immigration and, to some extent, through the relatively high fertility of Oriental Jewish immigrants, and increased at an annual rate of nearly 5 percent, on average, over these 33 years. As a result, as Table 4 and Figure 5 show, the balance of Jews and Arabs remained remarkably constant: 81 percent Jewish to 19 percent Arab in June 1948; 84 percent Jewish to 16 or 17 percent Arab at the end of 1981. (At the end of 1982, the Jewish percentage was 83 percent, see Table 2, page 9.) Thus differentials in fertility and immigration have so far balanced out to maintain the demographic status quo between the Jewish and Arab populations of Israel.

However, demographic changes have considerably shifted the ethnic or relig-

Figure 5. Growth of Jewish and Arab Populations in Israel: 1948-1982



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 1983*, No. 34 (Jerusalem: 1983) Table II/1.

ious balance within these two major groups. While the Jewish population was undergoing a process of "Orientalization," from 15 percent Oriental in mid-1948 to 52 percent in 1981, the Arab population was undergoing a process of "Islamization," from 69 percent Moslem in mid-1948 to 78 percent in 1981 (see Table 4).

The political future of the West Bank and Gaza Strip is still undecided. Within the present borders of Israel, the population share of Jews of European-American origin was only 40 percent in 1981, although the total Jewish proportion was 84 percent at the end of that year. In the combined 1981 populations of Israel and the Occupied Areas, the share of Jews of European-American origin was only 31 percent and the total Jewish proportion was 65 percent. Thus, annexation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip would even now have critical demographic consequences and this in turn would have cultural, political and economic implications.

The Future: Demographic Patterns and Israeli Society

What do these current demographic patterns imply for the future? What are growth patterns and variations among the groups making up Israel's demographic mosaic likely to be over the next several decades? How will these patterns affect Israel's population age structure, particularly the proportion of dependent elderly persons and arrangements for their social and economic welfare? What implications will future demographic trends have for cultural and political dominance, either within the present boundaries of Israel or within a "Greater Israel" if the Occupied Areas are annexed and the large numbers of Arabs living there are incorporated into Israel's society?

Population projections: 1980-2015

To begin to answer these questions, projections for 1980-2015 have been made separately and combined for the Jewish population in Israel, Arabs (or the non-Jewish population) in Israel, and the Arab population in the presently Occupied Areas. As with any population, Israel's population structure at some future date will be shaped both by its current structure and by trends in life expectancy (or mortality), fertility and migration between now and that future date. Hence these projections are based on the actual distribution of the three population subgroups by age and relative numbers in 1980 and on assumptions about group differentials in life expectancy, fertility and migration trends between 1980 and 2015. An outline of these assumptions is shown in the Appendix table (page 38).

Life expectancy is assumed to increase slightly for all three groups. For Arabs in Israel, only one trend is assumed for fertility (a decline from a total fertility rate of 5.0 births per woman in 1980-84 to 2.8 in 2010-14) and for migration (continuing zero net immigration). For Jews in Israel and the Arab population in Occupied Areas, the projections vary according to "low" and "high" assumptions regarding fertility and migration. For the Jewish population, fertility is projected to decline from a total fertility rate of 2.7 births per woman in 1980-84 and stabilize at 2.0 under the low assumption and at 2.5 under the high assumption. Fertility for Arabs in the Occupied Areas begins with a total fertility rate of 7.5 in 1980-84 and drops to 4.5 in 2010-14 under the low assumption and to 5.5 in the high assumption. The low and high assumptions for migration between 1980 and 2015 range for the Jewish population in Israel from an annual net immigration of 3,000 to 15,000, while net emigration ranges from 5,000 to as high as 34,000 per year for the Arab population in the Occupied Areas. The results of these alternative projections are shown for 1985, 2000 and 2015 in Tables 6 and 7. In Table 6, the "minimum" projections use the low assumptions regarding fertility and migration for both the Jewish population in Israel and the Arab population in the Occupied Areas, while the "maximum" projections use the high fertility and migration assumptions for these two populations. In Table 7, the minimum projections combine the low assumptions for the Jewish population in Israel and the high assumptions for the Arab population in the Occupied Areas; the maximum projections combine high assumptions for the Jewish ppulation and low assumptions for Arabs in the Occupied Areas. Our consideration of the impact of demographic trends on Israeli society over the next several decades is based mainly on these projections and on a projection of the Jewish population of Oriental origin.

Future population growth

As we have seen, Israel's population growth was extremely high in the first years following independence in 1948, thanks to heavy immigration and the then high fertility of Oriental Jews (as well as that of the small Moslem minority). Since then the rate has dropped to about 1.8 percent a year (see Figure 1, page 10). This decline can be expected to continue, even according to the maximum projections shown in Table 6, which assume higher fertility and net annual immigration for the Jewish population than do the minimum projections. The overall population growth rate for Israel within its present boundaries is projected to vary between 1.4 and 1.7 percent a year up to the end of this century and then to drop during the next 15 years, though it will still be over 1 percent a year as seen in Table 6. These are high growth rates by current standards of more developed countries. Israel's total population reaches 6.9 million in 2015 according to the maximum projection and 6.2 million according to the minimum projection, up from 4.1 million at the end of 1982.

The Jewish population within Israel is

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Table 6. Projected Population Growth for Jews and Arabs: Israel and Israel and Occupied Areas, 1985, 2000, 2015

Population group	Projection	Population (in thousands)			Average growth rate per year (in percent)	
		1985	2000	2015	1985-2000	2000-2015
Jews in Israel	Minimum	3,534	4,160	4,698	1.1	0.8
	Maximum	3,585	4,496	5,444	1.5	1.2
Arabs in Israel	One projection	744	1,096	1,481	2.6	2.0
Israel (Jews and Arabs)	Minimum	4,278	5,256	6,179	1.4	1.1
	Maximum	4,329	5,592	6,925	1.7	1.4
Arabs in Occupied Areas	Minimum	1,262	1,603	1,851	1.6	0.9
	Maximum	1,262	1,938	3,142	2.9	3.3
Arabs in Israel and Occupied Areas	Minimum	2,006	2,699	3,332	2.0	1.4
	Maximum	2,006	3,034	4,623	2.8	2.8
Total population in Israel and Occupied Areas	Minimum	5,540	6,859	8,030	1.4	1.1
	Maximum	5,591	7,530	10,067	2.0	2.0

Source: Authors' estimates, based on census and other official base data.

Note: See Appendix Table (page 38) for assumptions used in minimum and maximum projections. In this Table 6, focusing on population growth, the minimum projections combine the low fertility and migration assumptions for Jews in Israel and Arabs in the Occupied Areas and the single series of assumptions for Arabs in Israel. The maximum projections combine the high assumptions for both Jews in Israel and Arabs in the Occupied Areas and the single series for Arabs in Israel.

likely to grow at somewhere between 0.8 and 1.5 percent a year over the next generation, while the Arab population in Israel will continue to grow by 2.0 to 2.6 percent a year. The Arab population's relatively high growth stems from its current very large proportion of young people in or about to enter the childbearing ages (the result of high fertility) which will keep total numbers of annual births high even though the rate of births *per woman* is expected to decline markedly.

The future growth of the Arab population in the Occupied Areas will depend on two factors which are difficult to predict. One is the timing and pace of their transition to lower fertility and the other is the extent of Arab emigration from these areas, which in the West Bank, at least, has been quite significant in recent years, as noted. Assumptions about these factors explain the relatively large differences between the minimum and maximum projections for this group shown in Table 6. If the Occupied Areas are annexed by Israel, the population growth rate of this "Greater Israel" could be a high 2.0 percent a year up to 2015, and population numbers could reach 10 million in 2015. (A population growing by 2 percent a year doubles in number in 35 years.)

These relatively high overall population growth rates and the differences among the three groups have social and political implications which we outline below, after a look at the implications of future changes in the age composition of the population within Israel's current boundaries.

Age structure and aging

In 1955, 35.3 percent of Israel's population were children under age 15, 59.9 percent consisted of men and women in the working ages of 15-64, and 4.8 per-

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cent were the elderly, aged 65 and over. By 1980, the proportion of children had declined to 33.3 percent, because of declining fertility, while the proportion of elderly increased to 8.6 percent, and that of people in the working ages remained fairly constant at 58.2 percent. Since our projections assume further declines in fertility, the proportions of children are projected to decline to 27 percent in 2000 and 25 percent in 2015. The share of the elderly is projected to reach 9.8 percent in 2015, which is not high relative to other developed countries. (The proportion of persons aged 65 and over in the U.S. population is close to 12 percent in 1984 and is projected to be just over 15 percent in 2015, as the first of the baby boom generation, born 1947 to 1964, reaches retirement age.[6])

It is significant, however, that the proportion of Israel's population in the 15-64 age group, which must support the dependent groups below and above these ages, may be expected to increase to nearly 66 percent by the year 2015. This increase in the proportion of people in the working ages, coupled with the projected decline in the overall population growth rate, will be economically beneficial for Israel.

After 2015, however, both the number and share of the elderly aged 65 and over will increase significantly as the enlarged birth cohorts of the mass immigration period of the late 1940s and 1950s begin to enter those ages. In addition, there will be changes in the ethnic composition of the aged. Like earlier ethnic shifts in Israel's overall Jewish population, these will result from the dominance of Oriental Jews in the immigration influx from the late 1940s to the mid-1960s and their initially higher fertility. In 1948, 80 percent of the elderly were of European origin, since the majority of immigrants prior to the establishment of Israel came from European countries. This proportion was still a relatively high 72 percent in 1970. However, when the expanded birth cohorts of the 1950s and early 1960s dominated by Afro-Asian ethnic groups

Embassy of Israel

Afro-Asian Jews will predominate among elderly Israelis after 2015 when the expanded birth cohorts of the 1950s reach retirement age.

begin to reach retirement age in the early part of the next century, the proportion of the elderly of European origin will drop to well below 50 percent.

Assuming, as is quite reasonable, that the educational and occupational status of adults in Israel will not change radically over the next 30 years, this ethnic shift will likely be accompanied by a major shift in the socioeconomic status of the elderly. For example, about three-quarters of Israel's current elderly people have at least a primary school education and only one-quarter failed to complete primary school. By 2000, the proportion in the first category will be down to 58 percent and could fall lower after that. Similarly, the proportion of the elderly who have worked in high white-collar occupations (professionals and managers) is projected to decline from about 30 percent at present to only 24 percent in the year 2000 and could also decline further in the following years.

Accompanying these shifts will be a transition in the potential for the family

support of the elderly that has traditionally characterized the Afro-Asian ethnic group. This increasing segment of the elderly population will be left with a smaller number of adult children to support them than earlier generations had—an estimated decline of one-third in the number of potential family supporters between 1970 and 2000 alone. This is because, during the 1950s and 1960s, family size fell more rapidly than socioeconomic status improved for Israelis of Afro-Asian origin.

This combination of a growing proportion of elderly people, shifts in the ethnic and socioeconomic composition of this group, and potentially less family support for those of Afro-Asian origin will engender and accentuate a host of welfare and institutional problems for Israel early in the 21st century. These problems, like many others, stem in large part from the successful implementation of the policy of mass immigration in the early years of statehood.

Jewish ethnic balance

A central theme in the evolution of Israeli society has been the changing ethnic balance within the Jewish population. As we have seen, this has resulted from shifts in the volume and composition of immigrant streams, changes and differentials in fertility among immigrants, and from rapidly declining mortality among Oriental Jewish immigrants. These have transformed the Jewish Israeli population from 85 percent of European origin, as it was just after the state's foundation in 1948, to 52 percent of Afro-Asian origin by 1981. The Orientalization of the Jewish population will continue in the future, both among first-generation immigrants and among second and later generations of Jews born in Israel.

The pace of Orientalization will depend mainly on immigration, since the fertility of Afro-Asian Jews is now close to that of European-American Jews. Any future immigration will inevitably be dominated by Jews from Europe or America because few Jews remain in Afro-Asian countries. Hence, a resurgence of immigration would slow the process of Orientalization. However, even conservative projections suggest that by 2015 the proportion of Orientals in the Jewish population will almost certainly be up to 60 percent. This has obvious implications for the socioeconomic characteristics of the Jewish population.

No less important are the expected political implications. Barring changes in ethnic voting patterns or a very large influx of immigrants from Western countries, the rightwing political parties that assumed power in 1977 are likely to remain in power for the foreseeable future. Moreover, as Orientalization increases over the years, it will take ever greater shifts in ethnic voting patterns or increases in Western immigration to swing political control back from "right" to "left."

Jewish majority in Israel

The shifting ethnic balance within the Jewish population has evolved as an issue only since 1948, but the relative growth of the Jewish and Arab populations and the issue of a Jewish demographic majority have been prominent themes since Jews began resettling in Palestine in the 1880s. On the eve of Israeli Independence, Arabs formed the majority in the population of Palestine at 66 percent. After the War of Independence, the Arab proportion of the population within the borders of the new state was down to 19 percent; in 1982, it stood at 17 percent. Mass immigration maintained the Jews' overwhelming majority in Israel's population; without immigration, the Jewish proportion would have dropped to about 65 percent in 1970,[7] and still lower by the end of 1982, when it was actually 83 percent.

Future changes in the proportion of Jews in Israel will depend not only on Jewish fertility and immigration but also on the patterns of Arab fertility. In the latest projections, it is assumed that Arab fertility will continue to decline, from 5 births per woman in 1980-84 to 2.8, on

Table 7. Projected Population Size and Percentages Jewish and Arab, by Territorial Boundary: 1980, 1985, 2000, 2015

(Minimum and maximum based on projections for Jewish population)

		1980	1985		2000		2015	
		Actual	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
			Israel					
Percentage Jewish	All ages	83.6	82.5	82.7	79.2	80.4	76.0	78.6
	0-14	76.7	76.1	76.3	71.5	74.6	69.0	75.0
	15-64	86.2	84.6	84.8	80.6	81.4	76.7	78.5
	65 and over	93.8	94.0	94.1	91.6	92.3	89.1	89.8
Percentage Arab	All ages	16.3	17.4	17.3	20.8	19.6	24.0	21.4
Total population (in thousands)		3,923	4,277	4,330	5,256	5,592	6,179	6,925
		Israel and the Occupied Areas						
Percentage Jewish	All ages	64.8	63.8	64.1	57.8	62.5	50.4	62.0
	0-14	55.0	52.9	53.2	43.1	50.7	35.1	53.5
	15-64	68.8	68.1	68.4	62.8	66.2	54.8	63.5
	65 and over	84.1	84.7	84.9	81.3	82.6	78.7	81.6
Total population (in thousands)	Jewish	3,283	3,534	3,585	4,160	4,496	4,698	5,444
	Arabs, Israel	640	744	744	1,096	1,096	1,481	1,481
	Arabs, Occupied Areas	1,132	1,262	1,262	1,938	1,603	3,142	1,851
	Total	5,055	5,540	5,591	7,194	7,195	9,321	8,776

Source: See Table 6.

Note: See Appendix Table (page 38) for assumptions used in minimum and maximum projections. In this Table 7, focusing on the relative size of the Jewish population, the minimum projections combine the low fertility and migration assumptions for the Jewish population, the high assumptions for the Arab population in the Occupied Areas, and the single series of assumptions for Arabs in Israel. The maximum projections combine the high assumptions for the Jewish population, the low assumptions for Arabs in the Occupied Area, and the single series for Arabs in Israel.

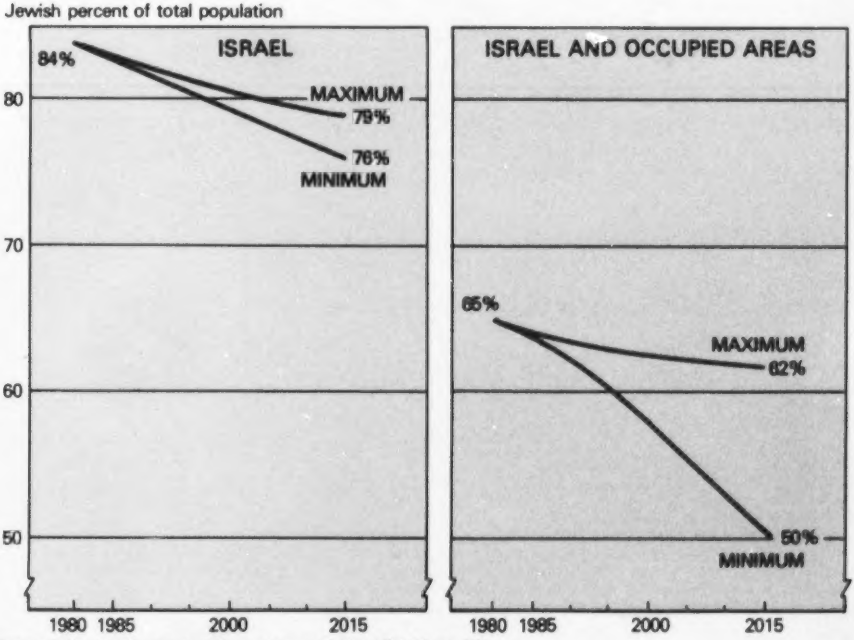
average, in 2010-14. The Jewish proportion will nevertheless decline even under maximum fertility and immigration assumptions for the Jewish sector, but the decline will be very small. In 2015, the Jewish proportion of Israel's population will be 79 percent according to the maximum projections and 76 percent according to the minimum projections shown in Table 7 and Figure 6. Since the Jewish population has an older age structure than the Arab minority, the Jewish percentage varies by age. Among children under age 15 the Jewish proportion in 2015 is lower than the Jewish percentage in the total population (75 versus 79 percent in the maximum projections) and the reverse is true for the elderly aged 65 and over (90 percent versus 79 percent).

Hence, it can be argued that the majority-minority positions of Jews and Arabs within Israel are not likely to change dramatically over the foreseeable future.

Jewish-Arab balance within Greater Israel

The picture, of course, would be very different if Israel were to annex the Occupied Areas and include their Arab populations within a Greater Israel. Even under the high assumptions for Jewish fertility and immigration, the Jewish proportion would then shrink to 62 percent in 2015, according to the maximum projection shown in Table 7 and Figure 6. Under the assumptions for the minimum projection it would be just 50 percent. Both these alternatives allow for con-

Figure 6. Jewish Percentage in Populations of Israel and Israel and Occupied Areas, Maximum and Minimum Projections: 1980-2015



Source: Authors' estimates, based on census and other official base data.

Note: Based on maximum and minimum projections shown in Table 7.

siderable fertility decline and continued emigration among Arabs in the present Occupied Areas.

Assuming that Israel continues as a democracy, the Arabs of these areas would become Israeli citizens with full rights, as are the Arabs now in Israel proper. The resulting Greater Israel would then be a bi-national, if not, indeed, an Arab-dominated state. If Israel chooses not to extend political rights to the incorporated populations, the extreme result would be a potentially inflammable "colonial" relationship between a minority of Jews and the large proportion of disenfranchised Arabs living within the boundaries of Greater Israel.

The issue of "cultural" dominance

The Zionist movement, which was the driving force behind modern resettlement of Jews in Palestine and the political foundation of the state of Israel, was clearly dominated by Europeans and Western culture, both politically and ideologically. Will the state of Israel remain European or "Western" in the future? Current projections indicate that the proportion of Jews of European or American origin is unlikely to exceed 30 percent of the total population within the present boundaries of Israel in the year 2015 and would be only some 22 percent of the population of a Greater Israel.

Hence, Israel might be transformed into a non-European, non-Western political and cultural society. This assumes that the political and cultural character of Oriental Jews is not radically altered by educational and socioeconomic progress over the next several generations.

The demographic basis of Israeli society and the ethnic-religious mosaic it reflects present complex issues which will continue to play key roles in Israel's future. The major questions raised in the 19th century by Zionists in Europe, again at the time Israel was founded, and in political debates today will remain salient into the 21st century. Will Israel be a Jewish state? Will it remain a Western society? Whatever the ideological, social, political, economic and cultural complexities of these questions, demographic processes will remain central factors among those determining the future of Israel. □

Appendix Table. Assumptions Used in Population Projections

Demographic measure and date	Population subgroup				
	Jewish population in Israel		Arab population in Israel	Arab population in Occupied Areas	
	Low assumption	High assumption	Single series	Low assumption	High assumption
Total fertility rate (births per woman)					
1980-84	2.7	2.7	5.0	7.5	7.5
1985-89	2.5	2.5	4.3	7.2	7.7
1990-94	2.3	2.5	3.8	6.8	6.9
1995-99	2.0	2.5	3.2	6.0	6.6
2000-04	2.0	2.5	3.0	5.5	6.3
2005-09	2.0	2.5	3.0	5.0	6.0
2010-14	2.0	2.5	2.8	4.5	5.5
Life expectancy (years)					
1980-84	74		71.5	58.5	
1985-89	75		72.5	61.5	
1990-94	75		73.5	63.5	
1995-99	76		73.5	65.5	
2000-04	76		73.5	65.5	
2005-09	76		73.5	65.5	
2010-14	76		73.5	65.5	
Average annual net migration (in thousands)					
1980-84	+5	+15	0	−20	−20
1985-89	+5	+15	0	−15	−22
1990-94	+5	+15	0	−10	−24
1995-99	+5	+15	0	− 5	−26
2000-04	+3	+10	0	− 5	−28
2005-09	+3	+10	0	− 5	−31
2010-15	+3	+10	0	− 5	−34

Note: See Tables 6 and 7 for the combinations of low and high assumptions used in the minimum and maximum projections shown in those tables.

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